

# **Novel, Travel-Writing and Nation:**

**Studies in Selma Lagerlöf and Hans Christian Andersen**

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## *Declaration*

I declare that the submitted publications and introductions are my own work and that the work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Bjarne Thorup Thomsen, Edinburgh, 30 May 2008

## Introduction

The overarching focus of the portfolio of publications I have submitted for the PhD by Research Publications is the treatment of place – in particular the mapping and problematisation of nation space – in Selma Lagerlöf's and Hans Christian Andersen's novel- and travel-writing. Through a consideration of selected texts it is argued that manifestations of mobility, modernity and hybridity contribute centrally to the articulation of place in the works of both writers. It is further argued that the majority of the texts themselves display hybrid features, challenging the boundary between 'fictional' novel-writing and 'factual' travel-writing and combining a commitment to the 'real' with a recurring interest in the imagined.

Some aspects of the spatial experimentation which features in the works of both writers, as investigated more fully in the subsequent submitted publications, are summarised and linked together in an introductory essay, which uses motifs of 'locomotion' as its combining focus. The essay also offers a couple of additional textual or theoretical perspectives which could be of relevance to future study. The essay concludes by asking whether Andersen's and Lagerlöf's texts may be read as representing, on either side of the Modern Breakthrough in Scandinavian literature, a degree of resistance to what some critics have termed the 'solidity' of realism. Moving on to the submitted publications, the most comprehensive contribution to the portfolio is the monograph *Lagerlöfs litterære landvinding*. This was published in 2007 to coincide with the centenary of the completion of Lagerlöf's perhaps most influential, but also most controversial work, *Nils Holgersson* (1906-07). While being the author's greatest (sales) success and retaining a prominent place in the public consciousness to this day, this textbook-cum-travel-adventure has right from its first publication been the object of an ambivalent reception. It has been omitted from 'collected' editions of the writer's works, and it was a complicating factor in regard to the award of the Nobel Prize for Literature to Lagerlöf. The monograph offers a reassessment of *Nils Holgersson* as a key text in the delineation of the modern Swedish nation in the



wake of the dissolution of the Swedish-Norwegian union in 1905. It situates *Nils Holgersson* in Lagerlöf's oeuvre, in relation to main works as well as lesser-known texts. The seminal portrayal of Sweden is read, moreover, in the light of national currents and other cultural concerns around the turn of the nineteenth century and studied through the prism of current theories on nationhood and novel and on the connections between the two. The monograph is structured in the following way:

In its introduction the parameters and perspectives of the study are formulated and the novelistic hybridity of *Nils Holgersson* is highlighted. The following chapter traces the planning of the textbook and the development of what is termed its overriding 'discourse of mapping'. The next three chapters then present close-readings of various aspects of the text: its tension between notions of 'micro' and 'macro' home, including its metafictional elements; its complex formulation of the 'internal' and 'external' fabric of the national landscape; and its metaphorical representations of the national 'people'. The penultimate chapter concludes the consideration of *Nils Holgersson* with an overall assessment of the work as a modern, sophisticated novel, constructed around an interplay between the emergence of place and self. In a post-script the perspective of the study is further widened by discussing the treatment of (Nordic) national borders and their ambiguities as a recurring interest in Lagerlöf's work.

The reception history of Lagerlöf's writing is the topic of the following contribution to the portfolio, a review article which discusses the findings of Anna Nordlund's study *Selma Lagerlöf's underbara resa genom den svenska litteraturhistorien 1891-1996* (2005). The core argument of Nordlund's study is that right from the outset, i.e. the reception of the debut novel *Gösta Berlings saga* (1891), the critical construction of Lagerlöf as a writer has centred on a predominantly positive, yet limiting evaluation, which has tended to remove agency and artistic consciousness from the author, thus typifying the critical treatment of women writers. Unreflective receptivity, childlike emotionality and ethical orientation have been among the prominent attributes ascribed to the author (in some respects not unlike the reception of Andersen, one could add). The review stresses that the linkage of Lagerlöf's production to the author's native province of Västmanland is strategically essential for this critical tradition, especially for the claims that Lagerlöf's writing channels a popular story-telling heritage and

exists in isolation from contemporary cultural currents and ideological concerns. Thus, a centre-periphery complex seems to underlie the reception, alongside the gender-based confines. The review emphasises, moreover, that some of the developments in Lagerlöf's handling of the novel form may be considered as occurring in a dialogic relationship with – and even as representing statements of non-compliance with – the restrictions of the criticism.

The next two contributions to the portfolio discuss an expansive novel, which could be seen as one such response: the semi-documentary, 'factually' informed emigration novel *Jerusalem* (1901-02). This is another principal work in Lagerlöf's production from the first decade of the twentieth century. While *Nils Holgersson* is clearly a nation-oriented text, *Jerusalem* could be said to deal with spatial entities below and above the size of the nation, i.e. the local and the 'global'. Initially focused on a limited, though in some instances universally conceived, rural community in the Swedish district of Dalarna, the novel goes on to bring this community into contact with the international, the modern and the urban. The complex interchange between various notions of home and spiritual belonging in the novel's volume I are investigated in the first contribution. This reads the topographical tensions in the volume in terms of a power struggle between different directions of orientation, between family- and faith-linked places, between old and new worlds, arguing that the text is characterised by spatial ambiguities from its outset. The second contribution considers the representation and perception of the foreign, the city and, at the same time, the Holy Land in the novel's volume II. The main argument is that problems of representation and meaning are written into the reshaped versions of Biblical locations which are offered in the volume. Following the novel theorist Lennard J. Davis, these reconstructed locations are considered 'known unknown' places. Their status or validity tend to remain unclear: are they disappointing – even dangerous – or spiritually uplifting sites; are they credible places or mere mirror images of the believers' mindset? Just like a typical form of mobility of the characters depicted in the volume is their unsure traversing of landscapes and cityscapes, the meaning of the environment itself is drifting between 'actual' and 'textual', between perceived and projected. Thus, the discussion approaches the second, 'Oriental', volume of *Jerusalem* as encapsulating a homeless condition and its crisis of

signification, while also acknowledging that the volume contains restorative processes, especially in its second section.

Lagerlöf's interest in both 'Nordic' and 'Oriental' places was shared by Andersen. This is documented in the following two contributions, which focus on Andersen's travel-writing. Investigating respectively the travel books *I Sverrig* (1851) and *En Digtets Bazar* (1842), the contributions aim to illuminate the maximum geographical range of Andersen's travel-writing. At the same time, they identify commonality in the texts in terms of the conception of places as contingent and connected, the attraction to (metaphors of) the machine and the modern, and the fascination with the exotic. The first contribution contextualises Andersen's travel-writing as climaxing around the time of transition from 'Romantic' travel to touristic travel. It goes on to read *I Sverrig* as a work which balances Romantic inspirations with a commitment to the modern condition. While the travelogue is informed by several of the desires feeding into the Romantic travel project – such as the passion for wildness of nature, for local colour and for 'extreme' destinations – it does not partake in the dissociation from modernity and industrialism normally connected with Romantic travel. On the contrary, it features an immersion in local *industrial* colour, embracing, like Lagerlöf's later portrayal of Sweden (which it may have influenced indirectly), the country's natural-industrial complex. Drawing on the idea of travel-writing as a form of translation process, the contribution compares the actual journey on which Andersen based *I Sverrig* with the textual version. It concludes that the travelogue is the expression of a freely recording and imagining mind, presenting a poetical picture of Sweden which fuses factual and fictional, natural and cultural, national and international. The second contribution assesses the representation of Constantinople in *En Digtets Bazar* against Edward Said's notion of Orientalism. It argues that 'orientalising' approaches may be found in the text's tendency to eroticise, and sometimes demonise, the local inhabitant, with some noteworthy slippages occurring between notions of man, woman, child, animal and machine. This is linked to Said's understanding of the Orient as a site for the exploration of the 'underground self' of European culture and to the idea of the liberation of the senses of the northerner in the south as being a standard motif in European travel literature. In other respects, however, Andersen's text is shown to resist orientalisation. It is read as

playing with the positions and identities of the 'westerner' and the 'easterner', Christian and Islamic. Similarly, it is shown to render the metropolis as a melting pot of cultures and use the Bosphorus as a trope for the interface and the manoeuvring between the Orient and the Occident.

The portfolio concludes with a publication which discusses Andersen's novel-writing and aspects of its critical reception. It begins by tracing the origins of the tradition of assessing Andersen as a deficient novelist by examining Søren Kierkegaard's seminal critique in *Af en endnu Levendes Papirer* (1838). Predicated on a construction of Andersen as a not fully constituted personality, Kierkegaard asserts that this lack of development leads to novels which cannot convey a philosophy of life, but remain reliant on fragmented pictures of the author's superficial experiences, typically connected to a compulsion to travel. This evaluation, and its underlying notion of the proper novel as a form of totality and truth, is then set against the assessment, as advocated for instance by Danish critic Klaus P. Mortensen, of Andersen as a conscious moderniser and innovator in Danish literature. On this understanding, the very de-centredness, mobility and multiplicity of plot and perspective of the Andersen novel are features which make it alive to the modern condition and contribute to progressing the genre in Danish literature during the course of the nineteenth century. In accordance with this emphasis on novelistic experimentation in Andersen, the remaining part of the contribution makes a case for the reassessment of *De to Baronesser* (1849), the author's fourth novel. The national imagining in this novel is read as an instance of complex engagement with the topographical challenges of the genre. While the text clearly privileges the Danish monarchy including Schleswig as the only spheres which it can access through direct description – a prioritisation which is placed in the context of disputed Danish territoriality around the time of the novel's conception and publication – these terrains do not delimit the sphere of its interest or imagination. Rather, the negotiation between such 'rules' of description and the novel's desire to reach out – also to a wider literary market – produce a recurring play with place which situates Denmark in a transnational continuum, involving in particular Scotland and England.

In all, the submitted publications on Lagerlöf and Andersen may be seen as contributions to the reassessment of two Scandinavian cultural figures of 'world

literature' status, highlighting proto-modernist aspects of their oeuvre as well as some reductive patterns in their reception history.



## Introductory essay

### On Forms and Fantasies of Locomotion in Lagerlöf and Andersen

#### 1.

Forms and fantasies of locomotion figure frequently and variedly in both Lagerlöf and Andersen. The following essay takes us on a sketchy tour – twisting and turning at times – through some themes of transport in both writers' works, including a look at some 'travels' undertaken by motifs themselves. The essay works as a summary and link-up of some of the findings of the submitted publications, while also offering, it is hoped, some additional insights.

When Lagerlöf in December 1909 in Stockholm gave her acceptance speech for the Nobel Prize in Literature, her point of departure quite literally was the railway journey that had taken her from Värmland to the capital. In order to stage an encounter with her late father and communicate the news of the prize and her debts of gratitude, she continues by transforming the apparently mundane journey into a space trip:

Var och en, som har farit på tåget i natt och mörker, vet, att det kan hända, att vagnarna långa stunder glider framåt märkvärdigt stilla utan en skakning. Buller och rassel upphör, och det jämna dånet från hjulen förbyter sig i stillsam och entonig musik. Det är, som om järnvägsvagnarna inte längre fore fram på syllar och skenor, utan glede bort i rymden. Nå, just som jag tänkte på att jag ville råka far, hände något i den vägen. Tåget började ila framåt så ljudlöst och lätt, att jag tyckte, att det omöjligt kunde vara kvar på jorden. Och så började mina tankar leka: "Tänk, om jag nu fore till min gamle far i himmelrik! Jag tycker mig ha hört, att sådant har hänt andra; varför skulle det inte hända mig?" (Lagerlöf 1915:238f)

Gesturing towards a text which had been a major contributing factor to the award of the Nobel Prize, this vertical redirection was itself a reworking of *Jerusalem's* opening chapter, 'Ingmarssönerna'. In this, the thoughts of the protagonist, 'Lill'

Ingmar Ingmarsson, likewise 'löpte i väg med honom, så att han knappt visste, om han var kvar på jorden' (Lagerlöf 1909a:12f), enabling him to establish a virtual discursive space in which his anxieties can be aired. Incidentally, in a further, transmedial, reworking of the scene in Victor Sjöström's 1919 silent film adaptation of 'Ingmarssönerna' (part I), the protagonist accesses heaven by climbing a giant ladder. This is depicted in a prolonged, stylistically inventive sequence, which combines Biblical iconography with silent cinema's interest in bodily and spatial spectacle. In its ironies and its concretisation of the mobility between spheres it is not unlike the opening of the Nobel speech.

## 2.

Although Ingmar in *Jerusalem* does not take the train to heaven, railway travel performs prominent functions elsewhere in the novel. The motif bridges the seemingly disparate locations of its two volumes, the first focused on Dalarna, the second set in Palestine. In the conclusion of the first volume the railway is connected with the forces of change and rupture which have descended on the hitherto sheltered and self-sufficient parish. The newly constructed local train station, from which the Swedish emigrants will depart in search for the Holy Land, could be said to provide the first representation of the 'foreign', alienated condition that they will experience on arrival in Palestine. The over-dimensioned yet empty station environment seems to scar the local landscape that is being abandoned and to function as a primarily prospective place. A few pages into the novel's second volume the railway motif is reactivated, as the disconnect between expectation and experience is played out during the newcomers' train trip from Jaffa to Jerusalem. Partly focalised through the collapsing consciousness of Birger Larsson, a sick and, as it turns out, dying member of the emigrant group, the journey through sacred locations develops into a nightmarish, labyrinthine experience, in which state of mind and topography conflate. The train sequence works to introduce the problem of 'actual' places refuting their Biblical/textual significance, the novel bearing out J. Hillis Miller's argument that the state of homelessness could be seen as corresponding to a crisis for the referential function of language (Hillis-Miller:11). In terms of Mikhail Bakhtin's typology of the travel novel in 'Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel', *Jerusalem*

would seem to belong to the category which contrasts home with 'an alien world separated from one's own native land by sea and distance' (Bakhtin 1996:245). Apart from a five line factual summary of the emigrants' itinerary which opens the second volume, the long duration of the journey between north and south disappears so to speak in the telling gap between the two volumes. However, as we have seen, the representation of the railway contributes, among several other means, to suggesting a trail of change, modernity and crisis of meaning which cuts across the 'home'-'away' binary.

### 3.

Hans Christian Andersen was no stranger to railway travel and railway tropes either, of course, or to the interlinking of train travel and feelings of flight, for that matter. This is most clearly evidenced by his famous illumination, 'Jernbanen' in *En Digters Bazar*, of his own first railway ride, from Magdeburg to Leipzig. Periodising nineteenth-century travel, Roger Cardinal argues that Romantic travel, which tended to be anti-modern, solitary and unregimented, went into decline from the mid-century onwards, when steam-propelled forms of locomotion enforced 'a much higher travel tempo, while also making travel more affordable and thus more democratic' (Cardinal 1997:148). This, in turn, contributed to creating the conditions for early tourism. While several of these developments are reflected in 'Jernbanen', Andersen's text, however, seems fully capable of locating the Romantic in the railway experience.

'Jernbanen' conveys the commodification of travel, the control of time and space, and also the risks which the train technology brings with it; but more importantly it practises joy of construction, thrill of speed and freedom of space. In part a pedagogical piece, published five years before the first Danish railway line (between Copenhagen and Roskilde) opened in 1847, it begins by building in its reader's mind a model railway. In so doing, it draws on energies similar to those which Fredric Jameson identifies in utopian literature: the pleasures of constructing, of bricolating and cobbling together, and of miniaturisation (Jameson 2004:35). This latter process is in play when Andersen describes the moment of departure, drawing the toy world, a frequent focus in his fairy tales, into the picture: 'de første Skridt gaaer det sagte, som om en Barnehaand trak den lille



Vogn' (Andersen 2006a:233). As the train gathers momentum, the depiction of 'extreme' mobility is facilitated firstly by an emphasis on subjective perception, which dynamises solid structures and challenges notions of unambiguous reality: 'Hvad var det Røde, der som et Lyn foer tæt forbi? Det var en af de Vagthavende, der stod med sin Fane'; 'Marken [er] en piilsnar Strøm'; 'vi foer forbi et Plankeværk, som jeg saa forkortet til en Stang' (Andersen 2006a:234). Secondly, the new travel mode is captured through a range of similes based on alternative, traditional or natural, forms of locomotion. Prominent among these is flying:

Du seer ud af Vinduet og opdager, at Du jager afsted, som med Heste i Gallop; det gaaer endnu hurtigere, Du synes at flyve, men her er ingen Rysten, intet Lufttryk, intet af hvad du tænkte Dig ubehageligt! (Andersen 2006a:233)

Det er som By ligger tæt ved By; nu kommer een, nu atter een! man kan ret tænke sig Trækfuglenes Flugt, saaledes maa de lade Byerne efter sig. (Andersen 2006a:234)

... vi flyve som Skyerne i Storm, som Trækfuglene flyve! (Andersen 2006a: 235)

Such similes serve, again, a pedagogical purpose, but they also contribute to the formulation of a compromise between traditional (Romantic) poetic domains and modernity. This quest for compromise informs much of Andersen's travel writing. In 'Jernbanen', it climaxes in an Andersen happy ending of sorts, when the properties of the machine are poignantly developed from the devilish to the divine.

In *The Railway Journey*, Wolfgang Schivelbusch argues that the emergence of railway travel led initially to a crisis for traditional forms of perception; gradually, however, it became instrumental in developing a new kind of *panoramic* perception, in which machine and mobility are of the essence:

Panoramic perception, in contrast to traditional perception, no longer belonged to the same space as the perceived objects: the traveler saw the objects, landscapes, etc. *through* the apparatus which moved him through the world. That machine and the motion it created became integrated into his visual perception: thus he could only see things in motion. That mobility of vision [...] became a prerequisite for the 'normality' of panoramic vision. This vision no longer experienced evanescence: evanescent reality had become the new reality. (Schivelbusch 1986:64)

While, as we saw, dissolution of reality and hence a degree of 'crisis' of perception are evidenced in 'Jernbanen' (but much more so in *Jerusalem's* train sequence), Andersen's text functions first and foremost as an introduction not just to the railway, but to panoramic perception as such. This interest in panoramic vision is shared by Lagerlöf, as we shall return to below.

Schivelbusch's notion of panoramic perception may be linked to ideas put forward in Michel Foucault's essay 'Of Other Spaces'. In this, Foucault outlines a brief history of space in what he terms the Western experience. The first stage, the 'space of emplacement' (Foucault 1986:22), is defined in terms of hierarchy, belonging and a well-defined relationship between, inter alia, sacred and profane, celestial and terrestrial places. However, in the early-modern period the space of emplacement is radically opened up, even dissolved, and replaced by movement in an infinite space: 'a thing's place was no longer anything but a point in its movement, just as the stability of a thing was only its movement indefinitely slowed down. In other words [...], extension was substituted for localization' (Foucault 1986:23). This form of extended space could be said to create the condition for panoramic vision. It may be of future interest to study Andersen's as well as Lagerlöf's texts in the context of further engagement with Foucault's ideas of space. Notions of emplacement and extension certainly seem relevant to the understanding of *Jerusalem*, for example. Even Lagerlöf's debut novel, *Gösta Berlings saga* (1891), which is read traditionally as a tribute to the old culture of the local world of Värmland, an apparent space of 'emplacement', is to a striking degree characterised by its constant use of movement and positional shifts, both in plot and narrative focus.

#### 4.

An echo of the celebration of the convenience and comfort of railway travel, which is an additional feature of Andersen's 'Jernbanen', may be found in *De to Baronesser*. This was Andersen's first novelistic attempt after the publication eleven years earlier of Kierkegaard's *Af en endnu Levendes Papirer*. Arguing, as we discussed in the introduction, that his colleague compensated a lack of personal development and life philosophy by an excessive and essentially unproductive mobility, Kierkegaard had accused Andersen of being 'overhovedet

bedre skikket til at fare afsted i en Diligence og besee Europa, end til at skue ind i Hjerternes Historie' (Kierkegaard 1872:42). Whatever the merit of this critique, stagecoaches, carriages and, not least, ships do indeed continue to abound in *De to Baronesser*.<sup>1</sup> A state-of-the-realm novel, it explores in its three parts the geographical and socio-cultural diversity of the Danish monarchy in the nineteenth century, including its 'debatable' southern borderlands. The novel's desire to delineate the realm not only in 'centre' but also in 'periphery' terms is demonstrated by its middle and most original part. This takes as its destination and main location the outermost limits of the monarchy in the shape of the North Frisian Islands of Halligerne, off the west coast of Schleswig. To reach these the younger of the novel's eponymous heroines and her Holstein foster parents must undertake a taxing horse-driven journey that negotiates all the obstacles, and displays all the diversity, of the Schleswig terrain, from Flensburg in the east to Dagebüll in the west. As they reach the marshland, the narrator provides a vision of the virtues of the infrastructure of the future, as the bumpy roads on the dykes are 'translated' into smooth railways:

Det flade, grønne Marskland udstrakte sig foran; de lange, stille Canaler vare ved den langvarige Regn gaaede over, og hele Strækninger stode under Vand. [...] Som et Jernbanenet over Sumpe og Enge strækker sig her, med lige Høide, de paa Diger opførte Veie; den Reisende maa ved Synet tænke paa Jernbaner, men med samme skuffede Følelse, som Karavanen i Ørkenen, der ved *fata morgana* seer Søer og Skove, hvor han veed kun er det øde Sand. (Andersen 2004:377f)

Thus, one web of traffic lines momentarily morphs into another, while in a parallel movement 'south' is projected onto 'north'. This feeds into the wider agenda of topographical inventiveness in the novel. The favoured field of the experimentation is sea and shipping. The thrust of the imagination is the promotion of the joined-up and hybrid aspects of places, including the porous nature of national boundaries. It would be of interest to compare *De to Baronesser* with Andersen's earlier

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<sup>1</sup> In other respects, especially in its overt ideological interest, the novel appears to attempt to accommodate Kierkegaard's novelistic ideals. Its recurring metaphor of the 'rød[e] Traad' (Andersen 2004:423 et passim) which runs through a person's/character's life could be read as reflecting, but perhaps also ironising, the coherent personal, and textual, development which Kierkegaard advocates.

'Denmark' novel *O.T.* (1836). In a previous context (Thorup Thomsen 1995), I have discussed this novel with reference to topics such as the relationship between geography and character psychology, the mobility of narratorial perspective and, in the field of locomotion, the role of steamboat vs. sailing ship (also of relevance to *Jerusalem*).

## 5.

Surveying the nation, in this case Sweden, remained the key concern in Andersen's other major work from around 1850, *I Sverrig*, which bears some interesting resemblances to *Nils Holgersson*. There is considerable congruence between the texts in terms of their interest not just in landscape but also in what we might term technoscape. Also, both insist on the role of freedom and imagination in the recording of their journeys by special reference to motifs of flying and migration.

The panoramic bird's-eye-views, which punctuated the portrayal of train travel in *En Digtars Bazar*, are foregrounded in *I Sverrig*. In its prologue, 'Vi reise', the notion of riding on the back of different birds – stork, swallow, gull and swan – works to display the major segments of Sweden, including those not covered in the following, more personalised travel account. This travel fantasy could be seen, then, as prefiguring the overriding focus employed in that later and most famous illumination of the Swedish terrain, *Nils Holgersson*, which uses the trajectory of the flying flock and the protagonist's panoramic gaze to 'stitch together' the fabric of the Swedish nation. While a direct influence from *I Sverrig* on Lagerlöf's hybrid novel cannot be established, Gunnar Ahlström demonstrates in his monograph on *Nils Holgersson* entitled *Den underbara resan* (1942) that an indirect connection is possible through an intermediary Swedish text, 'Det okända paradiset' (1875) by Richard Gustafsson (Ahlström 1958:156ff).<sup>2</sup>

Within Bakhtin's typology of the travel novel, *Nils Holgersson* comes closest to the category which (rather than demonstrating the distance between home and away, like *Jerusalem* ostensibly does) moves along the *road* (in *Nils Holgersson*'s case an airborne version of this) in order to show 'the sociohistorical heterogeneity

<sup>2</sup> 'Det är [...] både tänkbart och antagligt att det [...] existerar ett indirekt samband mellan H. C. Andersens antydningar och Selma Lagerlöfs genomförda fabel.' (Ahlström 1942:157)

of one's own country' (Bakhtin 1996:245). As to the *railroad*, the protagonist's ingenious form of transport leaves little scope for explicit depiction of train travel in *Nils Holgersson*. Railway tracks do, however, cut lines through several of its landscape panoramas. They also figure in the poem by Carl Snoilsky, 'Sveriges karta', with which the text opens. Like 'Vi reise' in Andersen's survey of Sweden, Snoilsky's poem functions as a prologue which presents a macro picture of Sweden before the narrative proper begins. It introduces *Nils Holgersson*'s main methodology of mapping the nation from the air and could in addition be read as a fantasy of the book's future function in an educational context. A core idea of the poem is the wanderlust released in the mind of the child as it encounters the map of the nation in a school setting. To the *modern* child – the poem's main concern – the fascination of map, mobility and nation is bound up with the epoch of the railway and its dissolution of distance:

Nu böjas över kartans blad  
de huvun små i lockig rad,  
som efter oss ta arvet.  
Vad oss syns långt, för dem syns kort,  
och alla avstånd svinna bort  
i järnvägstidevarvet.

De läsa på det svarta nät,  
som korsar älvens blåa fjät  
och genom fjället spränger.  
Lokomotivets gälla sus  
i flodsystemets dova brus  
på kartan in sig mänger.  
(Lagerlöf 1906:4)

In an examination of national ideals in *Nils Holgersson*, Lars Elenius discusses the expansion of the Swedish railway network around the turn of the nineteenth century, highlighting its role not only in the growth of the national economy, but also as a metaphor for national cohesion. He suggests, moreover, that the rapid and complex manoeuvrability of the flying flock in Lagerlöf's novel could read as a parallel to the properties of railway transportation (Elenius 2005:195). A radicalised version of such affinity between nature and the machine can, finally, be found in Harry Martinson's poetic reflection, 'Vildgåsresan', on the impact of *Nils*



*Holgersson*. Written in celebration of the Lagerlöf centenary in 1958, the poem turns the protagonist into a pilot and his journey – and the (imagined) mass movement it inspired – into an aviation route:

[Nils Holgersson] blev piloten i vår första flygdröm;  
och sträckets väg från Skåne upp till Lappland  
var (tecknad som den blev av lärarinnan)  
den första flyglinje som världen hade.  
Med den flög varje år och var termin  
en tallös skara barn på vildgåsvingar.  
(Martinson 1958:11)

6.

Thus, on either side of the Modern Breakthrough, there are some notable similarities between Andersen's and Lagerlöf's spatial experimentation in their novel- and travel-writing, as exemplified by the play with forms of locomotion. This experimentation may be seen as part of a wider pattern of deviating from the 'solidity' and seriousness which, e.g., Franco Moretti (2006) and Fredric Jameson critique in their understanding of realism. Jameson puts it in the following way:

An ontological realism, absolutely committed to the density and solidity of what is – whether in the realm of psychology and feelings, institutions, objects, or space – cannot but be threatened in the very nature of the form by any suggestion that these things are changeable and not ontologically immutable: the very choice of the form itself is a professional endorsement of the status quo, a loyalty oath in the very apprenticeship to this aesthetic. (Jameson 2006:112f)

This loyalty oath to realism is not taken by Andersen and Lagerlöf. Instead, part of the response of both writers to the modern condition (and to a confining criticism) seems to be to practise freedom of space and explore forms of alterity. These are themes which are developed in the following publications.

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### Kampen om Lagerlöf

Anna Nordlund

Selma Lagerlöfs underbara resa genom den svenska litteraturhistorien 1891–1996

Stockholm/Steag: Brutus Östlings Bokförlag

Symposion 2005, 512 sider

Anna Nordlunds doktorafhandling om receptionen af Selma Lagerlöfs forfatterskab i, hovedsagelig, svensk litteraturkritik fra udgivelsen af *Gösta Berlings saga* (1891) til nutiden rummer en stof- og perspektiv-rigdom, et overblik, en strategisk bevidsthed og en ambition, der er studieobjektet værdigt. Afhandlingen analyserer mønstrene og udviklingen i hvad Nordlund betegner som et konsekvent højt vurderet forfatterskabs behandling i såvel samtidens anmeldelser og oversigtsartikler (del I) som i eftertidens litteraturforskning (1940–1992) og i svenske litteraturhistorier (1916–1996) (del II). Selv om analysen er begrænset til den etablerede litteraturkritiske modtagelse, er det et særdeles omfattende materiale, der gennemgås. Samtidig stiller Nordlund et opfølgende studie i udsigt med vægt på forfatterskabets reception og rolle i bredere kultursammenhænge.

Afhandlingens hovedtese er, at modtagelsen af Lagerlöfs forfatterskab på den ene side afspejler en almen udvikling i svensk litteraturvidenskab – fra 'genetiske' til teksttolkende tilgange – men på den anden side er kendetegnet ved særlige kønsrelaterede ambivalenser, der har vist sig særdeles resistente. Indplaceringerne og (om)vurderingerne af forfatterskabet forbindes dels med de tidehvert eller paradigmeskift, der er gængse periodiseringer i svensk litteraturhistorieskrivning – forandringer i 'praksis' i Nordlunds terminologi – så som 'nittitalismens'

opgør med 80ernes 'tendens'-litteratur eller 'totalismens' komplementære afstandtagen fra 90ernes 'dekadence'-litteratur; dels og ikke mindst eftersporer afhandlingen en gennemgående tendens til at kombinere overvejende positive vurderinger med reduktionisme og indskrænkning i receptionen af Lagerlöf.

Med begyndelsespunkt i modtagelsen af *Gösta Berlings saga* konstruerer den dominerende, hovedsagelig mandlige kritik ifølge Nordlund en sejlivet forestilling om forfatterskabet som karakteriseret ved genial oprindelig, receptivitet, emotionalitet, barnlighed; Lagerlöfs værk reduceres til en passiv formidling af en folkelig fortælletradition, det ses som præget af ubevidsthed om egne kunstneriske virkemidler og kompleksiteter og af isolation i forhold til samtidige nationale og internationale kulturstrømninger. Fastkoblingen af forfatteren til føde-regionen Värmland er strategisk afgørende for disse konstruktioner. Udover eller forbundet med kønsproblematikken synes et centrum-periferi-kompleks således at være aktivt i Lagerlöf-receptionen, et perspektiv som Nordlund dog ikke udvikler nærmere.

Inden for sin indsnævrende horisont tildelte den dominerende samtidskritik så Lagerlöf successive og forbundne roller: som eventyrfortæller i gennembrudsårene, som værner om sædelighed og samfundsmoral i tiåret efter Nobelprisen (1909) og senere som traditionalist i en moderne tid. Og mønstrene gentager sig i nyere tid. Oscar Levertins bestemmelse af Lagerlöf som »den mest underbara litterära anomali« (Nordlund 2005: 102) i hans 1903-essay, der anses for afgørende i formidlingen og befæstelsen af det begrænsende billede af forfatterskabet, genfindes således 86 år senere i litteraturhistorieværket *Den svenska litteraturen*, hvor Lagerlöf fremstilles som »atavism«, »unikum« og »en lysende relikv fra berättarkonstens äldsta tider«, og hvor koblingen mellem 'berøvelse' og berømmelse fremstår med særlig tydelighed: »Att göra henne medveten och modern är att

förneka hennes unika originalitet« (Lönnroth og Delblanc 1997 [1989]: 103). Tilsvarende konstaterer Nordlund en tendens i dele af kritikken til at betone Lagerlöfs 'koldhed' og manglende (sans for) kærlighedsliv i en linje, der løber fra Georg Brandes' rosende, men unægtelig også restriktive anmeldelse af *Gösta Berlings saga* i Politiken i januar 1893 (»helt igennem føler man, at Fortællerinden er en ugift Dame, for hvem et stort Omraade af Livet [...] er en lukket Bog« (Nordlund 2005: 67)) til Henrik Wivels *Snedronningen. En bog om Selma Lagerlöfs kærlighed* (1988). Sidstnævnte udkom ironisk nok kort tid før frigivelsen af Lagerlöfs hidtil båndlagte brevvekslinger (1990) begyndte at kaste lys over hendes seksualitet og kvindelige kærlighedsrelationer.

Problemet med den dominerende kritiske optik, hvis tendens Nordlund anser for typisk for behandlingen af kvindelige forfatterskaber, er, at den bygger på en udtalt præmis om, at visse intellektuelle kompetencer og erfaringsmæssige domæner er utilgængelige for den skrivende. Afhandlingens kønsperspektiv manifesteres fra begyndelsen, hvor det konstateres, at Lagerlöfs »dimensioner genom decennierna [övervakades och begränsades] för att inte spränga gränserna för vad en kvinnlig författare förmodades förmå« (Nordlund 2005: 11). Eftersom dette fastslås to sider før det formuleres som afhandlingens formål »att undersöka om könet har påverkat föreställningar om Selma Lagerlöfs författarskap genom den svenska litteraturhistorien, och i så fall på vilket sätt« (Nordlund 2005: 13), skabes der en vis unødvendig usikkerhed om grænsedragningen mellem studiets præmisser og konklusioner. Dette indtryk forstærkes af retoriske grunde af, at næsten identiske formuleringer figurerer på fremtrædende plads i indledning og afslutning (angående en litteraturhistorieskrivning, som udsætter kvindelige forfatterskaber for nedvurderende behandling »utifrån en världsbild som särskiljer 'manligt' och 'kvinnligt' och utgår från/tar för givet att män och 'manlighet' är överord-

nat kvinnor och 'kvinnlighet' « (s. 13/351)). Dette eksemplificerer desuden en vis tendens til gentagelse i betoningen og formuleringen af studiets overordnede tese.

Er afhandlingens 'rammefortælling' således enhedsskabende, slås man ved gennemlæsningen af den detaljerede kritikhistorie af receptionens rigdom og mangestemmighed samt, indirekte, af Lagerlöfs manøvredegtighed og modstand i forhold til de restriktive roller, man forsøgte at tildele hende. Ved siden af overblikket og hovedtesens klarhed er det et af afhandlingens karakteristika, at den konsekvent kaster lys over de sommetider overraskende konstellationer og de kompleksiteter, der omgiver kritikken af forfatterskabets forskellige tekster. Et eksempel på dette er diskussionen af det innovative debutværks modtagelse, der med anvendelse af Lagerlöfs egen metafor af flere kritikere er blevet set som en 'vingeklipning' af forfatteren. Man forstår, at Nordlund forholder sig med forbehold til denne historieskrivning, der jo i sig selv kan læses som indeholdende elementer af en passivisering og objekt-gørelse af forfatteren.

For det første må det noteres, at begrænsningsforsøgene krydser kønsgrænserne. Leveritins, Karl Warburgs og Brandes' forskellige forsøg på at 'indhegne' forfatteren matches således fuldt ud af de konservative kvindesagsforkæmpere Sophie Adlersparre og Eva Fryxell, der havde hjulpet Lagerlöf frem. I en forsvarsartikel udgivet i den svenske kvindebevægelses tidskrift *Dagny* i 1891 legitimerer Lagerlöfs tidlige litterære mentor Adlersparre således *Gösta Berlings saga* med henvisning til de moralske, patriotiske, barnligt-naive og regionale kvaliteter, hun ser i værket. Ved at plædere for dydige snarere end dekadente, for traditionelle snarere end avantgardistiske værdier kommer Adlersparre ironisk nok til at indgå i en slags ideologisk alliance med Lagerlöfs ærkemodstander Carl David af Wirsén og er med til at lancere langlivede forestillinger, ikke mindst i dele af den kvindelige kritik, om forfatterskabets moralske

gehalt. Disse forestillinger var særligt fremtrædende i motiveringerne for tildelingen af Nobelprisen til Lagerlöf. Samtidig med at Nordlund skarpsindigt analyserer Fryxells og Adlersparres positioner, undlader hun ikke at betegne sidstnævntes artikel som udtryk for »missriktad välvilja« (Nordlund: 52). Dette er betegnende for en tilbøjelighed, som afhandlingen lejlighedsvis udviser, til at lade 'tvivlen' i højere grad komme kvindelige end mandlige kritikere til gode. Et af de mest vidtgående eksempler på hvad nyere angelsaksiske kønsstudier kalder 'denial of agency' – på sæt og vis selve kernen i Lagerlöf-modtagelsens problemkompleks – synes således at være Ellen Keys udsagn i en oversigtsartikel fra 1903, at »Selma Lagerlöf äger icke sig själv emedan andan äger henne« (Nordlund: 110). Nordlund forklarer velvilligt men uklart dette med, at Key ønsker at markere, at »personen Selma Lagerlöf inte syns i hennes författarskap« (Nordlund: 110). Nordlunds hovedtese er tilstrækkeligt overbevisende og velunderbygget til, at hvad man kan opleve som ansatser til forskelsbehandling af kritikerne er unødvendigt.

Hvad Nordlunds detaljerede diskussioner for det andet demonstrerer, er, at Lagerlöf gør modstand mod kritikkens manipulationer. Allerede i et brev til Adlersparre påpeger hun således 'fortroligt' men insisterende, at hun ikke kan reduceres til (et ubevidst organ for) sin forestillingsevne: »I all hemlighet skall jag säga tante att min kompositionsformåga är lika väldig som min fantasi« (Nordlund 2005: 51). Det løber da også som en subtekst igennem Nordlunds afhandling, hvordan Lagerlöf delvis imødekommer men samtidig til stadighed udfordrer de begrænsninger, der forsøges nedlagt over hendes forfatterskab. Når en Karl Warburg har givet hende det råd at holde sig til gendigtning af lokale folksesagn, udgiver hun en roman, *Antikrists mirakler* (1897), der udspiller sig i Italien og beskæftiger sig med idé-debat, et andet område som kritikken mente hun ikke havde sans for. Når en Georg Brandes patroniserende har anbefalet hende at holde sig til det lille for-

mat, udgiver hun en makro-roman som *Jerusalem* (1901–02), et nationalt epos og en styrkedemonstration. Og hvis disse værker ikke aflivede myterne om hende som lokal, anti-moderne og uden kompositionsevne, burde dette definitivt være sket med *Nils Holgerssons underbara resa genom Sverige* (1906–07), der omfatter det 'nye' industrielle Sverige, udtrykker innovative indsigter i nationens 'komposition' og rummer radikale demokratiske idéer. Udgrænsningen af denne roman, hendes største succes og en af hendes mest komplekse tekster, fra 'samlede' udgivelser af hendes værker og forbigåelsen af den i begrundelsen for tildelingen af Nobelprisen er sigende. Udviklingen i Lagerlöfs forfatterskab kan således også læses som et subtilt spil med og mod forventningshorisonter. Afhandlingen rummer stimulerende ansatser til en sådan analyse; men yderligere studier, der testede dette perspektiv, ville være velkomne.

Hvad Nordlunds gennemgange for det tredje viser, er, at receptionen meget hurtigt kom til at handle om kampen om stortalentet Lagerlöf, inden længe den triumferende Lagerlöf. Hun 'overlever' alle paradigmeskift i den forstand, at nye skoler ønsker at binde hende til eller vinde hende for deres programmer og generationsopgør. Hun bliver efterhånden uantastelig i kulturetablisementet. Hendes status bliver så høj (og hendes arbejde så mangefacetteret), at hendes betydning nok kan konstrueres og omkonstrueres, men aldrig forbigås. Efterhånden begynder den egentlige litteraturforskning også at blive lydhør over for de udfordringer, forfatterskabet frembyder. Nordlunds forskningsstudie behandler ikke mindre end 21 monografier udgivet på svensk. Nordlund understreger dog, at man skal frem til 1950'erne og 60'erne, før man ser indgående tekststudier, der har som målsætning at dokumentere kompleksitet, modernitet og bevidsthed i forfatterskabet. Kvindelige universitetsforskere spillede en afgørende rolle i denne 'første bølge' af tekst-orienteret Lagerlöf-forskning. Således fremhæver Nordlund Vivi

Edströms afhandling *Livets stigar. Tiden, handlingen och livskänslan i Gösta Berlings saga* (1960) som det første betydelige strukturalistiske studie ikke bare af debutværket men i svensk roman-forskning overhovedet. Tilsvarende ses Ulla-Britta Lagerroths afhandling *Körkarlen och Bannlyst. Motiv- och idéstudier i Selma Lagerlöfs 10-talsdiktning* (1964) som den til dato mest ambitiøse undersøgelse af forfatterens idé-verden og intellektuelle orientering. Og siden er forfatterskabet blevet diskuteret inden for en lang række teoretiske rammer, fra psykoanalytiske til bakhtinske. Et varigt problem er imidlertid, at de nye kritiske indsigter ikke i større omfang har influeret den etablerede litteraturhistoriekrivning. Nordlunds sammenligninger af behandlingen af Strindberg, Heidenstam og Lagerlöf i svenske litteraturhistorier fra 1916 til 1996 viser, at omtalen af de to mandlige forfattere må anses for dominerende ud fra både kvantitative og 'kvalitative' kriterier, samtidig med at den tidlige kritiks stereotypier lever videre i behandlingen af Lagerlöf. Selv om Heidenstams produktion på ingen måde har haft samme gennemslagskraft som Lagerlöfs, får han større opmærksomhed i overgribende, forbindelsesskabende diskussioner om bevægelser, idéer og om andre forfattere; han opskrives som forløber og ideolog, mens isoleringen af Lagerlöf fortsætter. Dette peger på en tendens til kønskonventionalisme og konservatisme i litteraturhistoriegenren og får Nordlund til at efterlyse et mere markant element af receptionshistorie i genren. Hendes egen afhandling er et fortræffeligt bud på en sådan nyskabende historieskrivning, samtidig med at den er et uomgængeligt, vægtigt bidrag til udforskningen af et forfatter-skab, der fortsætter med at fascinere.

Bjarne Thorup Thomsen

## Litteratur

Lars Lönnroth og Sven Delblanc (red.) (1997 [1989]): *Den svenska litteraturen. Den storsvenska generationen 1890–1920* (Stockholm: Bonnier Alba).



BJARNE THORUP THOMSEN

## Om topografin i Selma Lagerlöfs *Jerusalem*, del I

### *Landskapet i litteraturen och den centrifugala romanen*

Den amerikanske litteraturforskaren J. Hillis Miller betonar i sitt arbete *Topographies* (1995) behovet av en ny litteraturvetenskaplig forskningsriktning, nämligen en som undersöker det litterärt skildrade landskapet:

Tanken att landskapet ger en ram för romaner har knappast givit upphov till en särskild litteraturvetenskaplig forskningsinriktning på samma sätt som studiet av litterära figurer eller relationer mellan dem, eller av berättare och berättandets sammanhang har gjort det.<sup>1</sup>

Varje episk text innehåller topografier, det vill säga metaforiska motsvarigheter i ord till landskap, platser, bostäder, rum. Beskrivningar av landskap eller stadslandskap har, menar Hillis Miller, en funktion utöver den självklara att ge texten sannolikhet och etablera en specifik bakgrund för intrigen. Berättelsens rumsliga placeringar bestämmer handlingen och bär mycket mer mening än man ibland vill inse; ingen redogörelse för innehållet i en roman borde därför vara fullständig utan en "omsorgsfull tolkning av den funktion som landskapet (eller stadsskildringen) har i den."<sup>2</sup>

I denna artikel vill jag försöka bidra till utforskningen av det litterära landskapet genom att diskutera vissa aspekter av topografi och landområden i den första delen av Selma Lagerlöfs mästerverk och förbryllande sekelskiftesroman *Jerusalem* (1901–02).

I sin artikel "Kompleksitet og forkyndelse hos Peter Høeg" har den danske litteraturforskaren Søren Schou även han gett sig in i en diskussion om romaners konstruktion av rumsliga relationer. Han föreslår en åtskillnad mellan "den centrifugala" och "den centripetala" romanen. "Gennem hele århundredet har romangenren været kastet frem og tilbage mellem *centrifugale* og *centripetale* bevægelser."<sup>3</sup> Den centrifugala romanen karakteriseras naturligtvis genom sin bredd. Den skildrar skilda världar, socialt, geografiskt och på andra sätt; den innehåller en mångfald av personer; dess berättare råder över det hela som han arrangerar och kommenterar; dess intrig är dramatisk och känsloladdat växlingsrik snarare än vardaglig. Det är Schous uppfattning att centrifugala krafter på nytt dominerar romangenren och resulterar i texter som är storskaliga, intertextuellt medvetna, stolta över att vara konstruerade, förtjusta i historieberättandet, fulla av informationsflöden och med dramatiska, ofta spännande intriger. Peter Høegs bestsellerroman *Frøken Smillas fornemmelse for sne* (1992) är enligt Schou ett exempel på detta (även om Schous huvudpåstående är att denna roman med framgång förenar en sammansatt, "centripetal" skildring av huvudpersonen med ett brett, centrifugalt sätt att behandla rum och bipersoner).

Tanken i denna artikel är att Selma Lagerlöfs *Jerusalem* i sin topografiska metod och i andra hänseenden på ett meningsfullt sätt kan betraktas som en centrifugal roman.

### *Gamla och nya spelplatser*

Romanens två volymer "I Dalarne" (1901) och "I det heliga landet" (1902) representerar en förnyad öppning av romanformen efter en period då den naturalistiska romanens snävare horisonter och mot hemmen riktade perspektiv hade dominerat inom den nordiska roman-skrivningen. Som romanförfattare i vidskrämsformat ger sig Selma Lagerlöf djärvt i kast med sociogeografiska och andliga problem som hemhörighet och längtan, samling och skingrande, rotfasthet och upp-brott, religiös väckelse, modernitet, migration, kanske även nationsbildning. *Jerusalem* handlar om hur centrifugala och främmande krafter slår ner i vad som åtminstone verkar som ett dittills skyddat och själv-

ständigt samhälle i en lantlig socken i Dalarna. Den handlar om hur nya religiösa väckelsekrafter splittrar den namnlösa socken som är den första delens huvudspelplats liksom dess släkter. Det är en socken som i generationer har behärskats av upprepning, sammanhang och auktoriteter. Mot slutet av romanens första del har kontinuitetsprinciperna grundligt underminerats av en ny, lekmanaledd religiositet, som har introducerats i Dalaförsamlingen av en väckelsepredikant vid namn Hellgum, som plötsligt dyker upp i sitt gamla land från Chicago i den nya världen. Den lokala evangeliska väckelsen når sin höjdpunkt när den framkallar en massutvandring av en stor del av sockenborna till Jerusalem. Detta är det land man längtar till, den "andra" spelplats i texten som i religiösa och bibliska termer samtidigt är den "ursprungliga" spelplatsen. Den heliga staden blir sedan huvudspelplats för romanens andra del. Jerusalem handlar sålunda både om att bli hemlös hemma och om att resa bort för att söka ett andligt äkta hem. Det handlar om förlusten av gammalt land och om försöket att förvärva eller erövra ett nytt. *Jerusalem* är kort sagt en text som är omsorgsfullt utformad enligt en topografisk konstruktionsprincip. I sina två delar ställer den sida vid sida fosterlandet och det främmande landet, det nationella och det internationella, Norden och Södern, gammalt och nytt, land och stad, samtidigt som de blandas och gränser suddas ut.

### *Att skriva Sverige, att skriva Palestina*

Selma Lagerlöf var mycket medveten om att hennes roman var en territoriell och topografisk erövring såväl av "Sverige" som av "Palestina". Hon grundade sin berättelse på en verklig händelse som nådde sin höjdpunkt år 1896 när 37 personer, sjutton vuxna och tjugo barn, emigrerade från Nås i västra Dalarna till Jerusalem. De var anknutna till en sekt, "Svenska Evangeliska Kyrkan", som förkunnade egendoms-gemenskap och förverkligandet av ett heligt människoliv enligt bibliska principer, och som inväntade Jesu återvändande i den heliga staden. Sekten grundades på 1880-talet i Chicago av den svenske invand-raren Olof Henrik Larsson, som 1889 dök upp i sin hustrus hemsocken Nås och började rekrytera anhängare med ganska stor framgång.

Snart hörde omkring femtio av sockenborna till Larsoniterna eller Lar-sarenerna, som de kallades. Larsson återvände till USA 1891 men höll regelbunden brevkontakt med den nygrundade församlingen i Nås. När Larssons sekt år 1896 beslöt att lämna Chicago och förena sig med den likasinnade American Colony i Jerusalem, uppmuntrade Larsson sina anhängare i Nås att följa efter, vilket många av dem gjorde. De sålde sina gårdar och lämnade sin hemsocken den 23 juli 1896. De reste med tåg till Göteborg och därifrån med ångbåt till Antwerpen, där de gick ombord på en annan ångbåt som var destinerad till Jaffa. På kvällen den 14 augusti anlände de till Jerusalem, som för flertalet av dem skulle bli deras hem för resten av livet.<sup>4</sup>

Selma Lagerlöf redogjorde senare för tillkomsten av romanen *Jerusalem* i den korta berättelsen "Hur jag fann ett romanämne" (1936) och berättade då att det var först sommaren 1897 som hon fick höra talas om denna ovanliga väckelse. Det var hennes väninna Sophie Elkan som visade henne en tidningsnotis om att utvandrade svenska bönder hade arrenderat ett stycke mark i Palestina. Selma Lagerlöf hävdar att hon omedelbart insåg att dessa händelser kunde utgöra basen för en romanintrig: "Jag vände mig småleende till Sophie Elkan. 'Det här kunde nog duga till ett romanämne'."<sup>5</sup> Det som är slående i redogörelsens värdering av ämnet är hennes sätt att betona dess nationella egenskaper och hur hon skriver in en dubbelhet i händelserna så att just genom övergivandet av nationen en nationell, svensk anda bekräftas:

De hade alltså rest ut till Palestina, dessa dalabönder. De hade för sin tros skull övergivit Sverige och uppsökt det fattiga och ödsliga heliga landet, och om allt detta hade jag ingenting vetat! [...] Jag visste ingenting om att de hade avhänt sig sina fäders jord och lämnat all sin egendom till sina trosförvanter. Men jag förstod att här mötte mig ett nytt stordåd av de svenska, och jag lovade mig själv, att jag skulle komma att skriva om det.<sup>6</sup>

Ironiskt nog måste Selma Lagerlöf ge sig ut på sin mest ambitiösa och krävande utlandsresa för att genomföra detta nationella romanprojekt. I december 1899 påbörjade hon och Sophie Elkan en odysse som varade mer än ett halvår och som förde dem till så främmande platser som



Alexandria, Kairo, Port Said, Jaffa, Jerusalem, Jeriko, Damaskus, Beirut och Konstantinopel. Det angivna syftet med resan var att samla litterärt material och särskilt för Selma Lagerlöfs del att besöka The American Colony i Jerusalem och intervju dess medlemmar.<sup>7</sup>

När man läser korrespondensen kring resan får man intrycket att de två författarinnorna redan då de först mötte de främmande lokaliteterna uppfattade dem som möjligt litterärt material, som skrivna platser eller topografier. Att det finns ett samband mellan "erövringen" av de främmande platserna och skrivandet om dem framgår tydligt av ett brev som Selma Lagerlöf skrev till Sophie Elkan den 8 juli 1900, då de just hade återvänt från sin resa och då Selma Lagerlöf skulle sätta igång arbetet på att skriva *Jerusalem*. I sitt brev föreslår Selma Lagerlöf en uppdelning av vad hon kallar de nyerövrade länderna för att hon själv skulle få "skriva Palestina":

Annars tänkte jag föreslå, att du skulle gå in på en delning af de nyerövrade länderna. Ge mig Palestina och Syrien med de religiösa af alla läger äfven judarna [...] och tag du Egypten med reselifvet, turister, engelsmännens civiliseringsarbete, de stora ångbåtarna. Jag tror aldrig, att du ämnat skriva Palestina, men du har ej kunnat vara säker för att ej Egypten skulle lockat mig. Men nu får du det i present och det är ett fint land.<sup>8</sup>

Sophie Elkan var inte emot tanken att dela de litterära länderna, men kom i ett senare brev, skrivet den 10 januari 1902, med rådet att Selma Lagerlöf skulle anlägga ett svenskt snarare än ett "orientaliskt" perspektiv även när hon skrev om Jerusalem: "Du får ej nu göra något österländskt utan svenskt äfven i Jerusalem."<sup>9</sup> Detta föreslogs kort efter den framgångsrika utgivningen av romanens första del. Om vi antar att Selma Lagerlöf följde Sophie Elkans råd, något som hon tycks ha ämnat göra (men som inte är föremål för diskussion här) och alltså gjort det nationella eller svenska perspektivet till ett centralt inslag i den andra, "utländska" delen av *Jerusalem*, så kan vi fråga huruvida den första, "svenska" delen innehåller ett "omlokaliserat" eller "omplacerat" perspektiv på den svenska marken eller om denna mark i huvudsak representerar en autentisk, inifrån avrundad värld.

### *Upprepning och avbrott*

Den centrala byggnaden och bostaden i första delen av *Jerusalem* är Ingmarsgården. Vivi Edström har i sin överblick över Selma Lagerlöfs författarskap, *Selma Lagerlöfs litterära profil*, på ett tankeväckande sätt föreslagit att Ingmarsgården skulle kunna ses som "huvudgestalt" i hela romanen.<sup>10</sup> Den gamla gården med sin svit av olika stora rum av olika rangordning – "förstuga", "storstuga", "lillkammare" och så vidare – är ett gott exempel på den komplexitet och det djup i behandlingen av rummet som är utmärkande för romanformen.<sup>11</sup> Gården står i texten för vidareförandet av det gamla livet, för i dag och i morgon som bilder av gårdagen. Intrigutvecklingen genom romanens första del är fast knuten till en maktkamp om kontrollen över gården som den fasta punkt varifrån socknen traditionellt har styrts.

Den känsla av kontinuitet som omger Ingmarsgården förstärks bland annat av namngivningen i romanen, som möjligen är realistisk men ändå för läsningen utmanande. De manliga huvudpersonerna, gårdens olika innehavare, kallas alla för Ingmar Ingmarson, och deras viktigaste medhjälpare, en torpare på gården, heter Stark-Ingmar. I sitt klassiska verk *The Rise of the Novel* (1957) hävdar Ian Watt att romanformen införde en ny litterär namnkonvention när den växte fram på 1700-talet och i början av 1800-talet. Romangestalter fick nu namn som var individualiserade och bestod av för- och efternamn och som påminde om "verkliga" namn men ändå på visst sätt skulle kunna vara karakteriserande.<sup>12</sup>

Det är lätt att iaktta hur Selma Lagerlöf i *Jerusalem* avviker demonstrativt från denna namngivningsmetod. Namnen på hennes manliga huvudgestalter anger att de är *upprepningar*; de företräder samma form och liknar varandra "som ett bär är likt ett annat".<sup>13</sup> De speglar varandra liksom de speglar platsen och platsen speglar dem. Innebörden i denna namngivning är att liksom det lokala landskapet och byggnaderna representerar förfäderna så bär de manliga huvudpersonerna förfäderna inom sig, en inre Ingmar, traditionens röst. I skildringen av Ingmar som barn är det framför allt som "lillgammal" han presenteras. Om Ingemarerna uppmärksam lyssnar till sin inre Ingmarsröst finner de därför hållningar, lösningar och vägar framåt genom att gå

tillbaka. Detta är precis vad Lill Ingmar gör där han går och plöjer i romanens berömda öppningsscen.

Denna scen är som så mycket i Selma Lagerlöfs berättande präglad av sin bländande narrativa uppläggning. Den når sin höjdpunkt i en detaljerad inre dialog, till sin form realistisk, inte bara mellan Lill Ingmars stridande tankar utan också mellan hans egen röst och den föreställda eller "berättade" röst som tillhör hans döde men alltjämt närvarande far, Stor Ingmar. Genom sådan utförlig inre verbalisering som återberättar de onda minnena och som kontrasterar mot hans yttre tystlåtenhet, upprättar Lill Ingmar förbindelse med sin egen inbyggda etiska kod och därigenom underförstått även med förfädernas seder och vilja. Denna förbindelse sätter i fortsättningen huvudpersonen i stånd att gå emot omgivningens fördomar, låt vara att han försenas av tveksamhet, tvetydighet, sinnesförändringar och missförstånd. Han når fram till den moraliska lösningen att han skall hämta sin fästmö från fängelset till Ingmarsgården, trots att hon har mördat hennes och Ingmars nyfödda barn. Genom detta har huvudpersonen fullbordat sin lärlingstid och genomgått den traditionella utveckling som låter en Lill Ingmar växa till en Stor Ingmars format: "nu får vi börja kalla honom Stor Ingmar" (s. 38).

Men om vi vänder uppmärksamheten till hur Ingmarsgården själv introduceras i romanen så ser vi hur texten nästan omärkligt undergräver det som tycks vara en utsaga om hemhörighet, rotfasthet och släkttradition. På romanens första sida presenteras gården genom en jämförelse med ett stort segelfartyg:

Det var likaså vackert att se den resa sig mittibland de jämna åkrarna, som det är att se ett stort fartyg höja sig med master och segel över den breda havsytan. (s. 7)

Detta är en beskrivning av natur och människoboning i nästan organisk samhörighet. Gården växer upp ur de jämna åkrarna och ger en lodlinje åt ett för övrigt horisontellt landskap. Denna lodrätthet betonas ytterligare av bilden av fartyget med master och segel på den vida havsytan. Bilden har dessutom tradition och antimodernism inskrivna i sig (medan den moderna franska ångarens undergång längre fram i romanen är en viktig länk i de komplicerade orsakssammanhang som

till slut resulterar i socknens splittring, utvandringen till Jerusalem och födelsen av ett nytt samhälle). De omedelbara betydelserna av bilden av segelfartyget i citatet är därför tydliga för läsaren. Likväl kan man hävda att man får en viss känsla av oro och sprickor i textmeningen. Ett segelfartyg är när allt kommer omkring en bild av rörlighet, resande, uppbrott och separation från landet och därför en lätt störande metafor för betydelsen av hembygden som är vad Ingmarsgården kan antas representera.<sup>14</sup>

Om vi som nästa steg i undersökningen jämför presentationen av Ingmarsgården med hur hela socknen till en början förs in i texten, så får vi se ett liknande mönster framträda.

### *Kartläggningar*

Tvärtemot vad läsaren skulle kunna vänta så upprättas inte överblicken över dalasocknens topografi i första kapitlet om "Ingmarssönerna", som på sätt och vis är en prolog till hela texten och som antyder många av de huvudkonflikter som senare kommer att upprepas och utvecklas. Den avgörande topografiska beskrivningen uppskjuts till det följande kapitlet, "Hos skolmästarns", som inleder den första av volymens två avdelningar. Här blir läsaren bekant med skolmästarens dotter Gertrud, som skall bli en av romanens huvudpersoner. Intressant nog karakteriseras hon av berättaren genom att det inte minst är frånvarande egenskaper som uppmärksammas:

Hon var alldeles ljus, nästan vit i håret, rosig och rundkindad, men hon såg varken så klok eller så lillgammal ut, som skolmästarbarn brukar. (s. 41)

Gertrud är inte "lillgammal", eller åtminstone mindre "lillgammal" än man kunde vänta sig. Detta skiljer henne markant från Ingmarssönerna och stämmer med att Gertrud senare blir företrädare för de nya väckelserörelserna i socknen. Det är Gertrud som i Selma Lagerlöfs berättelse får den betydelsefulla uppgiften att ge den första konstruktionen av socknens hela topografi, i det att berättaren i en lång passage i detalj beskriver hur hon på lek håller på att bygga en modell av den.

Den där vrån, där hon uppehöll sig, var hennes lekstuga. Där hade hon samlat ihop en hel mängd bitar av färgat glas, sönderslagna koppar och fat, runda stenar från älvstranden, fyrkantiga små träklotsar och annat sådant småplock. [...]

Hon hade stort arbete för handen, hon, där borta i sin vrå. Höll på med ingenting mindre än att skapa till en hel socken. Hela hemsocknen skulle hon bygga upp med både kyrka och skolhus. Älven och bron skulle vara med, de också, hon ville göra det riktigt fullständigt. [...]

Den runda dalen mellan bergen hade blivit täckt med jord ur en av mors blomkrukor, och så långt var allt rätt, men hon hade inte kunnat få den grönskande och odlad, som den borde vara. [...]

Dalälven, som flöt bred och präktig genom socknen, hade hon däremot kunnat lägga ut riktigt tydligt med en lång, smal glasbit, och den gungande flottbron, som förband socknens båda delar, låg för länge sedan och sam på älvvattnet.

De avlägsnare gårdarna och byarna hade hon också redan märkt ut med röda tegelstensbitar. Långt uppe i norr mitt bland åkrar och ängar låg Ingmarsgården [...]. (s. 41–42)

Om vi förutsätter att alla litterära beskrivningar av landskap är kartläggningar eller topografier, skrivna platser, så är denna landskapspresentation en karta över en karta. Selma Lagerlöf kunde ha valt att låta sin kraftfulla berättare presentera överblicken över socknen tidigare och på ett mer konventionellt och avrundat sätt, men hon har i stället lagt in fördröjningar, distanserande grepp och metareferenser i beskrivningen. Därigenom skulle beskrivningen av modellbygget även kunna läsas som en metafor för den kreativa konstruktionen av romanen – den kvinnliga konstnären i arbete. Vilken läsning vi än föredrar är det intressant att märka att modellen, vare sig den föreställer socknen eller texten, består av heterogena fragment och till en viss grad är ofullständig. Det bör också betonas att Gertruds sockenmodell som en parallell till romanens dominerande tema, det som gäller de splittrande och centrifugala krafterna, har byggts upp enbart för att strax förstöras och ersättas med en modell eller mosaik som avbildar det som skall bli tex-

tens andra viktiga plats, den heliga staden. När kyrkoherden som kommit på besök mot slutet av kapitlet lägger märke till Gertrud i hennes vrå och undrar vad hon håller på att bygga, så blir hennes svar: "Jag hade en så vacker socken [...] men vi läste om Jerusalem i skolan i går, och nu har jag förstört sock[n]en för att bygga ett Jerusalem" (s. 47–48). Gertrud, vars "ögon lyste av nöje" (s. 47), representerar den kombinerade glädjen i att bygga upp och riva ner, den pendelrörelse som är en så stark dynamisk princip i Selma Lagerlöfs skrivande i allmänhet och i *Jerusalem* i synnerhet.

Senare i samma del, i kapitlet "Hellgums brev" som handlar om brevet från Hellgum där han framför tanken på att emigrera till den heliga staden, avslöjas passande att en annan modell av Jerusalem, en målning, är ett inslag i Ingmarsgårdens interiör. I storstugan, det centrala rummet i den "svenska" spelplatsens viktigaste boningshus, finns en bild av den "andra", bibliska spelplatsen, och vi får intrycket att den har funnits där i alla tider. Eftersom målningen har en rätt undanskymd plats i rummet blir den ofta inte uppmärksammas, får vi veta, och den har dittills inte heller omnämnts av berättaren. Men genom de ansträngningar som berättaren gör tillsammans med gårdens invånare dras plötsligt uppmärksamheten till modellen som en ny förvarning om den kommande förflyttningen:

I storstugan på Ingmarsgården hängde uppe under taket en tavla, som för väl hundra år sedan hade blivit tillskapad av en gammal bygdemålare. Den föreställde en stad, innesluten av höga murar, och över murarna såg man gavlarna och takåsarna av flera hus. Somliga voro röda bondstugor med gröna torvtak, andra hade vita väggar med skiffertak liksom herrgårdsbyggnader, och andra åter hade tunga, kopparklädda torn liksom Kristine kyrka i Falun. [...]

Under tavlan stod präntat med stora siratutstyrda bokstäver: "*Detta är Guds heliga stad, Jerusalem.*"

Där den gamla målningen hängde uppe under taket, hände det inte ofta, att någon betraktade den. De flesta, som hade besökt Ingmarsgården, visste väl knappast om, att den fanns där.

Men i dag var en krans av grönt lingonris uppsatt kring tavlan, så att den strax föll den besökande i ögonen. (s. 161–162)



Passagens strategi är tydligt att blanda de två spelplatserna och sätta ut gränserna mellan dem. Målningen av den främmande staden är en typisk dalmålning, och den är bekransad och framhävd av något så ursvenskt som lingonris. Scenen på tavlan är också framställd som en alltigenom hemmagjord tolkning av den främmande staden. Slutligen är det värt att lägga märke till att denna modell av Jerusalem med sin rikedom på färg och form har delvis samma mosaikprägel som utmärker både Gertruds modell av socknen och, som många har påpekat,<sup>15</sup> även kompositionen i Selma Lagerlöfs roman som sådan.

### *En förtrollad värld?*

Man har hävdats att romanen är en episk form som är utmärkande för den "sönderfallande" eller "avmytologiserade" världen. Romangenren speglar subjektets transcendentala hemlöshet i den moderna världen.<sup>16</sup> Men när det gäller Selma Lagerlöfs romaner och andra berättelser har man i forskning och kritik ofta fäst uppmärksamheten vid deras traditionellt episka egenskaper och framhävt deras transcendentala värden. Genom att se mer speciellt på ett exempel på romanens presentation och tolkning av det "gamla" landskapet i socknen, skall vi nu undersöka huruvida längtan, avstånd eller upplösning är invävda redan i textens "tidiga" topografi eller om denna är en entydig teckning av en förtrollad värld där förbindelserna mellan marken och skyn, jorden och himlen, är öppna.

Först och främst bör vi betona att Selma Lagerlöfs roman innehåller landskapsskildringar som är helt häpnadsväckande i sin andlighet och som skulle kunna ses som skildringar av ett universum som är indränkt av transcendental mening. Ett exempel är följande passage från kapitlet "De sågo himmelen öppen":

[...] det måtte ha varit en mycket vacker kväll [...], alldeles stilla och klar, en sådan, då jord och himmel byter färg, så att himlen synes gå över i ljust grönt och jorden är överdragen med tunna dimmor, som ger allting ett vitt eller blåaktigt utseende. (s. 53)

Här speglar eller avbildar marken (eller jorden) skyn (eller himlen) som i sin tur speglar marken. Tillsammans bildar de ett obestämt eller flytande universum där "upp" kan översättas till "ner" och "ner" till "upp". Det är underförstått att det inte finns något svalg mellan det jordiska och det himmelska som inte går att överbrygga; polerna "citerar" varandra för att skapa en andligt laddad topografi vars motsatser kan utplånas.

I enlighet med denna vertikala öppenhet i topografin fortsätter texten kort efter den citerade passagen med en beskrivning av hur Stor Ingmar och Stark Ingmar en gång i sin ungdom såg in i himlen då de gick över bron:

[...] när Stor Ingmar och Stark Ingmar hade kommit hit ner och skulle gå över flottbron, var det, som om någon hade sagt till dem, att de skulle se uppåt. De gjorde så, och de såg himmelen öppen över sig. Hela himlavalvet var draget åt sidan som ett förhänge, och de båda stod hand i hand och såg in i all himmelens härlighet. (s. 53)

Å ena sidan bekräftar beskrivningen arkaiska föreställningar om ett autentiskt liv: hemma under himlavalvet och nära Gud. Världen är förankrad i ett bortanför som verkligen är närvarande. Det vertikala perspektivet i landskapet dominerar över det horisontala; landskapet är så att säga mer högt än brett. Å andra sidan är denna markering av det autentiska en aning oroande så till vida som den säger att hela himlavalvet var draget åt sidan "som ett förhänge". Denna bild kan framkalla associationer till teatern och dess kulisser och inge en viss oro. Beskrivningen innehåller subtila självreferenser som är så typiskt för romanen; den är medveten om att den är en modell, en *konstruktion* av det autentiska mer än något annat. Denna känsla av avstånd eller oäkthet förstärks av att det är kyrkoherden som återberättar för skolmästaren och hans hustru det som Stor Ingmar och Stark Ingmar vid den förres dödsbädd har berättat om sin avlägsna ungdom.



### *Det förlorade landskapet*

Det är anmärkningsvärt att en av romanens mest otvetydiga beskrivningar av ett "förtrollat" landskap, av den breda och djupa Dalälvsdalen, kommer sent i första delen, i kapitlet "Avresan". I en starkt framhävd skildring av den stund då man far över älven – den symboliska övergången från den lokala världen till den globala – och raden av vagnar stannar upp på bron, så inser de utvandrande sockenborna den oändliga skönheten i den gemensamma egendom som de skall mista, landskapet. Så får ironiskt nog uppskattningen av hemtraktens majestätiska närvaro sin förutsättning i förlusten och bortflyttningen. Det djupperspektiv som de utvandrande sockenborna nu anlägger på trakten och som styrs av det horisontala snarare än av det vertikala från förut, är inte bara vardagslivets välbekanta utan också ett perspektiv som anläggs av en iakttagare som står vid den lokala världens gräns och som är på väg att ställa sig utanför den:

Och vad ägde de mera, som var dem gemensamt? De ägde väl också skönheten i det, som de sågo här från bron. Den vackra utsikten över den breda, mäktiga älven, som flöt fram stilla och sommarljus mellan trädgrupperna, den långa utsikten genom dalen ända bort till de blåa höjderna.

Detta var deras, det satt inbränt i deras ögon. Och nu skulle de aldrig mer se det. [...]

Vackra hemlandsbygd [...] hör oss! Låt oss bedja Gud, att vi få mötas än en gång. Må vi få se dig åter i himmelen! (s. 220)

Insikten om autentiska värden vänds genast till en längtan till en avlägsen himmelsk återförening mellan människan och hennes hemlandskap. Utvandrarerna ber samtidigt till sin försvinnande hembygd och till den Gud de far ut för att söka – utan att veta om budskapet skall nå fram. De kommunikationsvägar som förut stod öppna mellan människan och himlen genom himlavalvet är nu historia. Landskapet förvandlas snabbt till en inre bild som i sin tur projiceras på en avlägsen himmelsk topografi och därigenom uttrycker längtan efter en återförtrollning av världen.

### *Epos och roman*

Sammanfattningsvis avslöjar en närläsning av vissa aspekter av topografin i *Jerusalems* första del att texten inte entydigt kan läsas som en berättelse om en övergång från sammanhang till fragmentarisering, från ett autentiskt liv i Dalarna till utvandringens inautentiska tillstånd. Romanens topografi är ända från början skildrad med en mängd dubbeltydigheter och distanserande grepp. Det betyder inte att romanen inte försöker att återställa vad den så villigt har förstört, men det betyder att romanen till sist är en text som handlar om att leva på de centrifugala krafternas villkor. Detta gör den till en mycket modern text.

Selma Lagerlöfs berättelse förenar "episka" begrepp som andlig vägledning och styrning, att följa "Guds vägar" (s. 15 etc.) och att veta hur "Gud styr" (s. 40 etc.), med den insikt om övergivenhet och frånvaro som hör ihop med det postepiska eller med romangenren. Medan texten å ena sidan livligt "minns" det gamla levnadssättet som helhet och i slutet av sin andra del med Ingmars heroiska hemvändande försöker återge dess centrala miljö, Ingmarsgården, dess ursprungliga betydelse, så "vet" den å andra sidan hur traditionella samhällen dör bort. Detta anger den genom att *inte* förena dess dubbla topografi och därigenom läka Dalasocknen, utan genom att i stället, samtidigt som dess prövade hjälte återvänder,<sup>17</sup> hålla fast vid att de flesta omvända sockenborna alltjämt är borta och utvandrade, särskilt Ingmars syster Karin Ingmarsdotter. Detta relativiserar oundvikligen kraften och helheten i den "gamla" skådeplatsen, ja, själva begreppen "gamal" och "ny" värld blir ifrågasatta som en följd av textens underminerande taktik. Sålunda bevarar romanen ända till slutet en mångfald perspektiv, en kluven komposition och en dubbeltydig topografi. I stället för att beteckna Selma Lagerlöfs berättelser som dunkla litterära atavismer som på mystiska vägar överförts till det moderna, så kan det därför vara värt att föreslå att det snarare är det komplexa samspelet eller spänningen mellan traditionell epik och den moderna romanens egenskaper som ger dem deras unika ställning.

*Översättning: Louise Vinge*

## Noter

- 1 J. Hillis Miller, *Topographies*, Stanford 1995, s. 6: "The notion that landscape provides grounding for novels has hardly given rise to a distinct mode of the criticism of fiction, as has the criticism of character, or of interpersonal relations, or of narrators and narrative sequence."
- 2 Ibid., s. 16.
- 3 Søren Schou, "Kompleksitet og forkyndelse hos Peter Høeg", i *Kritik*, 107, 1994, s. 1.
- 4 Vidare information om väckelsen i Nås finns i Martin Högberg, "Sveriges minsta väckelserörelse", i *Bron mellan Nås och Jerusalem. Om Näs-böndernas utvandring till Jerusalem i verklighet och dikt* (Lagerlöfstudier 1996), red. V. Edström, I. Larsson, M. Jonth, Stockholm 1996, s. 11–26.
- 5 Selma Lagerlöf, "Hur jag fann ett romanämne", i *Bron mellan Nås och Jerusalem*, s. 61. Artikeln publicerades första gången i *Svenska Jerusalem-föreningens tidskrift*, 1936, "Julhälsning från Palestina".
- 6 Ibid., s. 61.
- 7 Om Selma Lagerlöfs och Sophie Elkans resa se vidare Ying Toijer Nilsson, "Och så gick de i land i Jaffa...", i *Bron mellan Nås och Jerusalem*, s. 63–70.
- 8 Selma Lagerlöf, *Du lär mig att bli fri. Selma Lagerlöf skriver till Sophie Elkan*, red. Ying Toijer Nilsson, Stockholm 1993 (1 uppl. 1992), s. 147.
- 9 Ibid., s. 192.
- 10 Vivi Edström, *Selma Lagerlöfs litterära profil*, Stockholm 1986, s. 61.
- 11 Jfr Lennard J. Davis, *Resisting Novels. Ideology and Fiction*, New York and London 1987, s. 53: "[...] novelistic spaces must have dimensions and depth; they must have byways and back alleys; there must be open rooms and hidden places; dining rooms and locked drawers; there must be a thickness and interiority to the mental constructions that constitute the novel's space."
- 12 Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel. Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*, London 1992 (1957), s. 18–21.
- 13 *Skrifter av Selma Lagerlöf. Jerusalem I. I Dalarne*, Stockholm 1947, s. 9. Sidhänvisningar till denna utgåva av romanen ges i fortsättningen i artikeltexten.
- 14 Intressant nog används en liknande teknik i öppningsscenen i Peter Høegs *Frøken Smillas fornemmelse for sne*. Här förekommer en kyrkogårdsmiljö som verkar klart grönländsk men som slutligen lokaliseras till Köpenhamn. Då detta sker introduceras också en mäktig bild av en fartygsstäv, som åter inför något främmande i scenen och elegant pekar framåt mot den betydelseladdade båtmiljön i romanens mittparti. "[...] ved bare en

let distraktion [kan man] føle sig hensat til Upernavik, eller Holsteinsborg, eller Qaanaaq. [/] Men frem i mørket, som en skibsstævn, rager Vestre Fængsels mure, vi er i København." *Frøken Smillas fornemmelse for sne*, Köpenhamn 1994 (1992), s. 11.

- 15 Så använder till exempel Vivi Edström uttrycket "de inledande kapitlens pusselbitar", a.a., s. 73.
- 16 Om romanen i en avmytologiserad värld och förhållandet mellan epiken och romangenren, se det klagörande kapitlet "The theory of the novel and the autonomy of art" i Anthony J. Cascardi, *The Subject of Modernity*, Cambridge 1992, s. 72–124. En huvudtext i Cascardis diskussion är Georg Lukács' klassiska studie *Die Theorie des Romans* (1920).
- 17 Selma Lagerlöf undrade, efter det att hon hade fullbordat romanens andra del, om hon hade skildrat Ingmars hemkomst alltför harmoniskt. I ett brev till Sophie Elkan, skrivet sent i oktober 1902 (exakt datum är inte känt), beskriver författarinnan hur hon nu funderar över sin bok. Borde inte Ingmar ha blivit blind som en markering av vad han utstått i Det Heliga Landet (och inte "bara" ha mist ett öga, som romanen säger)? Hon skriver: "Jag tänker nu mycket på min bok. Vänder den fram och åter i tankarna och undrar hur den borde ha varit, för att ha blivit fullkomlig. För min del har jag fått den så genomförd, som jag tänkt mig den. [...] Det enda är kanske, att allt går för bra. Jag sitter och undrar öfver om han [Ingmar] ej ändå borde blivit blind för att det hela ej skulle göra ett för muntert intryck." *Du lär mig att bli fri*, s. 208–209.

**DESTRUCTION AND CONSTRUCTION IN  
SELMA LAGERLÖF'S JERUSALEM, VOL. II**

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**Jerusalem: A Written Place**

The locations of the Holy Land and in particular of Jerusalem, the Holy City, are prime examples of actual geographical areas which cannot be separated out from the writing of them. It is clear that the meaning of canonical places such as the Western Wall, Via Dolorosa or the Dome of the Rock cannot simply be derived from the physical contours of these locations or constructions but depends upon Biblical and other representations of them. It is equally evident that their meaning is different to people of different persuasions or of no fixed persuasion. What is less obvious, perhaps, is the suggestion made by some critics that Jerusalem hereby merely foregrounds what is a feature of all landscapes or cityscapes: that the landscape *as such* hardly exists, only different ways of mapping, imagining or constructing it through human activity.<sup>1</sup>

It could in this connection be suggested that Jerusalem as a place, by so clearly incorporating written or literary qualities, helps to highlight significant aspects of the representation of place in literature. All literary locations, including those which are commonly termed authentic, should be approached as written places, built in language rather than bricks and mortar. They are metaphorical equivalents in words of landscapes or cityscapes and as such they deserve and require careful interpretation. In his challenging study *Resisting Novels* from 1987, Lennard J. Davis argues that novelistic depictions of an actual terrain such as the London of Dickens or the Paris of Balzac result not in re-creation but in *reshaping* – that is, during the writing process the authentic places are converted into textual landscapes which supply new meaning (a meaning which in turn may influence our understanding of the 'original' place).<sup>2</sup> This reshaping happens through 'the intersection of the literary imagination and the social mythology.'<sup>3</sup> To social mythology we could of course add religious mythology, the physical contours of a place and so on.

Following on from Davis' argument, I shall in this discussion attempt to address the question of what form of reshaping is represented by the Jerusalem Selma Lagerlöf builds up in primarily the second volume of her complex turn-of-the-century novel titled, precisely, *Jerusalem* (published in two volumes in 1901 and

1902 respectively). It might be expected that a novel which takes the Holy Land and City as one of its core *loci* could be particularly rewarding for the critic who is interested in the relationship between language and place or literature and place. Such a text represents, we could argue, the writing of a written place or, phrased differently, a double topography. In the following, I shall therefore focus the investigation especially on the theme of the intricate relationship between landscape and language in Lagerlöf's text. Since this theme figures particularly prominently in the first of two sections of the second volume of the novel, I shall in the main confine my examination to this section. In a previous, parallel study in the British journal *Scandinavica* I have discussed how aspects of the topography – the writing of the place – in Volume I of Lagerlöf's novel may be read.<sup>4</sup> In the present study my emphasis, then, will be on aspects of topography in Volume II. One of the suggestions of the study is that the conceptual pair of *destruction* and *construction* may provide a useful tool for the understanding of the tensions of the topographies in Lagerlöf's text. The edition of the novel to which I shall be referring throughout is the revised version from 1909.

### **Model-Making**

A macro or wide-screen novelist, Lagerlöf in *Jerusalem* set out to tackle boldly socio-geographical and spiritual issues such as belonging and longing, gathering and dispersal, rootedness and uprooting, religious awakening, modernity, migration, possibly even nation-formation. The novel is about outside forces descending on what at least seems to be a hitherto sheltered and self-sufficient rural parish in the Swedish province of Dalarna. It is about a new form of religious belief splitting and splintering this unnamed parish – the core *locus* of the first volume – and its families right through, a parish which has for generations been dominated by repetition, cohesion and authority. Towards the end of the novel's first volume, 'I Dalarne', a new, layman-led religiousness, introduced to the Dala community by the holy healer figure Hellgum, who suddenly appears in his old country from Chicago in the New World, has thoroughly undermined the principles of continuity. The local evangelical awakening reaches its climax when it provokes a mass exodus by a considerable proportion of the parishioners to Jerusalem, which then becomes the core *locus* of the novel's second volume, 'I det heliga landet'. The Holy City is the longed-for territory, the 'other' location in the text which at the same time, in religious and Biblical terms, is the 'original' location. As such it is imprinted in the minds of the awakened laymen well versed in the Scriptures long before their experience of it as an 'actual' terrain. It is, expressed in a term borrowed from Lennard J. Davis, a 'known unknown' place.<sup>5</sup>



Just as Jerusalem is evidently not a place unknown to the protagonists of the first volume of the novel, nor is it unknown to the reader whom the volume has carefully provided with two significant model representations of the Holy City. The first of these models is the one which the school master's daughter Gertrud early in the text playfully and pleasurably pieces together in her corner after she has symbolically demolished a similar model of her home parish.<sup>6</sup> Later in the first volume it is revealed that a second model of Jerusalem, a painting, forms part of the interior of *Ingmarsgården*, the Ingmar Farm. This is the most significant dwelling in the first volume, depicted as a fixed point of power and continuity from which the Dala parish is traditionally ruled. The painting on the wall of the Ingmar Farm is described in the following terms:

Iorstugan på Ingmarsgården hängde uppe under taket en tavla, som för väl hundra år sedan hade blivit tillskapad av en gammal bygdemålare. Den föreställde en stad, innesluten av höga murar, och över murarna såg man gavlarna och takåsarna av flera hus. Somliga voro röda bondstugor med gröna torvtak, andra hade vita väggar med skiffertak liksom herrgårdsbyggnader, och andra åter hade tunga, kopparklädda torn liksom Kristine kyrka i Falun. [...]

Under tavlan stod präntat med stora siratutstyrda bokstäver: "*Detta är Guds heliga stad, Jerusalem.*"<sup>7</sup>

Through its description of this pictorial model Lagerlöf's narrative seems to draw attention to the problem of representation, to an unsettled relationship between signifier and signified, if we prefer. The scene depicted in the painting represents a very home-grown decoding of the foreign cityscape and follows artistic conventions traditional to the Dala region. It would seem that the inscription underneath the scene – the writing on the wall, as it were – is necessary to the interpretation of what is pictured.

The complexities which underlie such model representations of the Holy City in the first volume of Lagerlöf's novel point forward to one of the main themes to be developed in its second volume: that the state of uprootedness which the Swedish immigrants are to suffer in Palestine is experienced as a gap or gulf between the imagined version of the new place and its actual version – between model and reality. The American literary scholar J. Hillis Miller argues in his recent study *Topographies* (1995) that the state of homelessness could be seen as corresponding to an uprooted condition of language, to a crisis for the referential function of language.<sup>8</sup> The second volume's opening chapter, 'Murar av guld och

portar av bränt glas', would seem to be an exploration of precisely this form of crisis. This chapter was, as the Swedish Lagerlöf expert Vivi Edström has pointed out,<sup>9</sup> moved (in a somewhat revised form) from fourth to front position between the 1902 and the 1909 versions of the volume. Let us, through close reading a text sequence thus foregrounded, now investigate how the longed-for place is perceived by the parishioners on their arrival.

### Holy or Hellish?

When, from the deck of their steamer anchored outside Jaffa the travelling companions first survey the landscape they have finally reached, their impression of the new land can best be summed up by the term nondescript:

Det var ingenting påfallande eller märkvärdigt med detta land, och efter första ögonkastet sade säkert var och en av bönderna till sig själv: "Tänk, att här ser så ut! Jag hade trott, att det skulle vara något helt annorlunda. Det här landet tycker jag att jag *har sett många gånger förut*." (p. 233; my italics)

This is a statement of a landscape of lacking – of a place devoid of particularity, of a generalised setting dominated by absence rather than presence. It is only when Hellgum – the spiritual leader of the sect who has already lived in the land for a few months – intervenes, as the text has it, to tell what it was they saw ('tala om vad det var, som de sågo', p. 233) that the immigrants, through a sudden shift of perception, notice the uniqueness of the landscape stretching out and up before them:

I detsamma som han uttalade dessa namn, märkte svenskarna något, som förut hade undgått dem. De sågo, att solen spred ett rikare sken över himlen här än i deras land och att slätten hade ett skimmer över sig av skärt och ljusblått och silvervitt, som de *inte hade förmärkt annorstädes*. (p. 234; my italics)

The two passages quoted here are strikingly counterpointed with only ten lines separating them; during this short space the meaning of the landscape has been inverted from 'seen many times before' to 'not experienced elsewhere'. The magic formulae which bring about this transformation from drabness to a spiritually highly charged setting soaked in pastel shades are the Biblical place names such as the Plain of Sharon ('Sarons slätt') and the Judea Hills ('Juda berg') which Hellgum pronounced ('uttalade'). Thus, the text sequence could be

said to be an exemplary demonstration of how language transforms landscape. But, as so often in Lagerlöf, what the reader consequently faces are ambiguous, even contradictory, topographies. Is the quoted passage about eyes being opened up to a spiritual reality or is it about living a fiction created by belief? To these questions there would seem to be no unifying answers.

Meanwhile, the continuation of the arrival scene could be said to be not so much about how language changes or constructs landscape but about how landscape cannot live up to language – or, expressed differently, how landscape destroys the expectations aroused in the converted mind by the Biblical books. Interestingly, the character to whom the point of view is now handed after a collective viewpoint having been used initially is a sick and, as it turns out, dying member of the travelling party, namely the smith Birger Larsson. As soon as the peasants go ashore in Jaffa, Larsson becomes seriously feverish with his head aching ‘som om det skulle sprängas’ (p. 238). The foregrounding of Larsson’s condition would seem to be the text’s way of communicating that we have now entered a place which kills – especially when contrasted to the stressed fact that on reaching Jaffa everybody was ‘vid full hälsa’ (p. 233). Moreover, ample support for this interpretation can be found later in the section, most notably in the chapter titled ‘Guds helige stad, Jerusalem’, which takes the form of a continuous investigation into the question stated explicitly in the authorial voice: how can a city kill? (‘Hur kan en stad döda?’, p. 278) (see the discussion below).

What the smith Birger Larsson now observes with increasing disbelief when walking around in the town of Jaffa and on the subsequent railway journey towards Jerusalem through the Plain of Sharon and over the Judea Hills is a succession of burning, shrunken, dried up, withered, desolate, ugly, reeking and nauseating places – to quote some of the attributes provided by the text. Larsson’s experience of the very same places which Hellgum named to such great effect hours earlier is strikingly and destructively juxtaposed with the spiritual topography observed from the collective viewpoint of the believers. Similarly, what the smith experiences a few days later when carried around on a stretcher in the Holy City itself can best be compared to a journey into the bowels of the earth or a descent into Hell – and is indeed likened to these in the text: ‘Birger tyckte, att de buro honom ner i jordens innandömen’ (p. 242) or Birger ‘klagade över att han hade blivit buren in i helvetet’ (p. 245). A more powerful destruction of religious expectations – or of language reference – is difficult to imagine. The Holy City is reshaped into a hellish city.

Only exceptionally does the landscape Larsson experiences live up to expectation

– and then not unequivocally. The most significant occasion is when, just before entering the city, the smith suddenly from a distance sees a Jerusalem bathed in the shining light of the setting sun:

Det led mot kvällen, och solen stod helt nära randen av de västra kullarna. Den var mycket röd och stor, och den utgöt ett starkt sken över himlen. Även all jorden glimmade och sken i rött och gult. Men Birger tyckte, att det sken, som föll över jorden, inte kom från solen, utan från staden ovan honom. Det utgick från dess murar, som skimrade likt ljust guld, och från dess torn, som voro täckta med skivor av bränt glas.

Birger smålog åt att han såg två solar, på himlen en och på jorden en, som var Guds stad, Jerusalem.

Ett ögonblick kände han sig som botad av hälsobringande glädja.  
(p. 240)

This is a challenging passage to interpret. The sun – the overriding climatic factor in the depiction of the Holy Land and, as we shall see, a significant death metaphor elsewhere in the volume – is clearly the subject in the passage and the city the object. The city is a kind of moon, if we wish, reflecting the glory rather than generating it. And just as the moon is traditionally associated with falseness, so one could be justified in reading the text extract as a piece outlining *fake*. Larsson's understanding of the source of the shine is exposed by the text as false ('Birger tyckte') and the following cityscape description, which is dependant upon this false premise, verges on kitsch. Larsson's striking double vision of the sun could also be said to connote confusion or even delirium. Are we ultimately faced with a sick man's hallucination? The question is, in other words, to what extent the piece covertly undermines the religious reading of the city and pushes it in the direction of *madness*, or to what extent it is about the truth and strength of a spiritual cosmology within which two co-existing suns or sources of light are possible rather than merely the single physical one. The arguments in favour of the former interpretation might seem to be the more compelling.

What is beyond doubt, however, is that the deeper Birger Larsson subsequently travels into the city, the more convinced he becomes that he has been transported into the *wrong* Jerusalem – as another version of the theme of *fake*. The real Jerusalem, in contrast, remains elusive right to his death and to the chapter exit: like in a bad dream, it becomes the more distant the more he stretches out for it, unobtainable, he laments, not only to him but to all the fellow believers:

Ända till sin dödsstund låg han och yrade om det rätta Jerusalem. Han jämrade sig över att det flyttade sig allt längre och längre bort, allteftersom han sökte uppnå det, så att inte han och inte heller en enda av de andra någonsin kunde komma dit in. (p. 246)

Thus, to quote the final phrase of Karen Blixen's *Out of Africa*, 'the hand of distance'<sup>10</sup> pushes the promised land further and further away and not even death seems to be a gateway to it.

### **Construction, Destruction, Projection**

Thus, in summary, a combined reading of the model representations of Jerusalem in the first volume of Lagerlöf's novel and of the believers' initial encounter with the Holy Land and City as 'actual' terrains in the second volume suggests that the problem of representation is written into the treatment of place in Lagerlöf's text. The novel focuses attention on the intricate relationship between signifier and signified through two complementary techniques: one is based upon the construction of landscapes which are capable of matching language-driven expectations but whose credibility is also put in question; the other technique is based upon the destruction of similar expectations through the depiction of landscapes or cityscapes of lacking, incapable of living up to language. Clearly, the issues underlying these topographical techniques are also of relevance to the literary writing itself, thus arguably adding metafictional qualities to Lagerlöf's work.

Admittedly, one could reasonably voice the argument against our reading of Larsson's landscape experience that the piece is primarily about projection – thus returning to the question of viewpoint. It could be claimed that the piece is not so much about the *exterior* but rather investigates how a sick and dying man projects his *interior* – fever, nausea and approaching death – onto the landscape surrounding him. However, although some text evidence could be found to support the suggestion that projection is a form of sub-theme in the chapter – and of course this would mean yet another variation on the overriding theme of landscape and meaning – the problem with this reading is that it does not appear to be vindicated by what follows in the text. Even after Birger Larsson's death and the resulting abandonment of his viewpoint, the holy lands continue to be depicted as killing fields. The dominant general thrusts of the treatment of place, not only in the opening chapter but throughout the first section of the second volume, is – on the one hand – towards the creation of places imbued with destruction and – on the other hand – towards the depiction of characters



imagining spiritually uplifting topographies which, however, fail to be validated by the text as such. To underpin this assertion we shall now continue our investigation by attempting, over the next three parts of the study, a comparative reading of two highly interconnected chapters later in the first section, the aforementioned 'Guds heliga stad, Jerusalem' and the immediately following 'På morgonrodnadens vingar'. Our argument is that taken together these chapters contain a topographical dichotomy very similar to what we found in the Birger Larsson sequence.

### **Poisonous Language, Murderous Landscape**

The chapters in question contain two concurrent but opposing female *foci* – those of the friends Gunhild and Gertrud – two encounters with death and, not least significantly, two contrasting readings of the metaphor of the sun.

The first of these chapters opens with a narratorial, inclusive 'man' circumnavigating Jerusalem ('Det kan ju till exempel hända, att man tar sig för att göra en vandring runtom Jerusalem', p. 278), intent on discovering the actual location of the lethal in the city – 'var det Jerusalem finns, som är så förfärligt, att det kommer människor att dö' (p. 278). However, the investigative efforts of the narrator eventually lead to the finding that the lethal is primarily located at the level of language or communication: it is the mutual maligning of the competing factions of Christianity in the affluent and modern western part of the city which is diagnosed as the real cause of death:

Och här är det man finner det man söker. Här är själajaktens Jerusalem, här är de onda tungornas Jerusalem, här är lögnens, förtalets och smädelsens Jerusalem. Här förföljer man utan vila, här mördar man utan vapen. Dette är det Jerusalem, som dödar människor. (p. 281)

After thus having established, under the guidance of a 'participating' and 'inquiring' narrator, that it is false use of language – language without proper reference, we might say – which enables the city to kill, the chapter then moves on to demonstrate its finding at the level of the told characters, the Swedish colonists, and more specifically through the case and viewpoint of Gunhild, one of the younger female members of the awakening.

The text informs us that after the arrival of the converted contingent from Dalarna the colonists suffer serious stigmatisation to the extent that other people withdraw from contact with them in order to escape what is perceived as the contagion of



immorality, 'liksom de fruktade för att besmittas med något ont' (p. 281). Nevertheless, the Swedish newcomers manage to find some joy in the fact that they are experiencing groundless persecution in the city of Christ's crucifixion and are thus imitating their saviour. Soon, however, the imitation of Christian victimisation could be said to become too close for comfort, as the text, through the character of Gunhild, proceeds to enact the theme of the killing of the innocent. This happens in a passage which pointedly interlinks the destructive powers of what we could term a language out of order and a landscape out of order.

Through an exemplifying 'leap' into the particular, which is a technique typical of the text, the chapter now focuses on how one day in May Gunhild receives a letter<sup>11</sup> from her father informing her of her mother's death. The letter is kept in a calm, controlled and kind tone until, without any forewarning, in an angry, accusing postscript it attributes the death to the shock the mother had received from learning about the loose living of the colonists from the Swedish missionary press. After having read this letter Gunhild is in no doubt that she is confronted by words which are poisonous and ultimately going to kill her:

Hon satt och såg på brevet. Hon kände, att det innehöll ett gift, som skulle döda henne, och hon hoppades endast, att det skulle gå hastigt och vara snart över. (p. 285)

It could thus be claimed that the chapter aims doubly to demonstrate how a distorted, poisonous writing can kill: first the wrongfully accusing article kills Gunhild's mother and then the father's wrongfully accusing letter about this death in turn ultimately kills Gunhild, as shown in the continuation of the passage. The continuation demonstrates moreover that if the letter is the killer, then the landscape is an accomplice in the crime.

When Gunhild embarks the following day on a walk over open land from the city to the colony, she gets caught in what, according to the logic of the imagery used in the text, can only be described as an ambush by the sun: 'Det bländande solskenet träffade henne som ett skott', 'Det var som att vandra över en skjutbana, medan trupper sköto till måls', 'Solen hade alls inget annat att göra än att skjuta till måls på henne' (p. 285-86). In keeping with such elaborately developed figurative language, Gunhild herself is compared to a poor hunted animal: 'ett stackars jagat djur' (p. 286) and 'en liten arm rävsstackare' (p. 287). The depiction of the destructiveness of landscape reaches a peak when at one point Gunhild

gives in to a defiant desire to look the pursuing sun in the face. What she then perceives is an apocalyptic vision of a cosmology moving fatally out of order with the midday sky blackening and the sun careering out of its fixed position:

Medan Gunhild såg uppåt, blev himlen alldeles svart, men solen kröp ihop till en liten gnista med ett vasst och farligt sken, och hon tyckte sig se, att den frigjorde sig från sin plats på himlen och kom susande ner för att träffa henne i nacken och döda henne. (p. 286)

Although Gunhild manages to find a temporary shelter from the 'hunters' ('jägarna', p. 287) in one of several ruins used as settings in this section of the novel, she proceeds nevertheless, when suddenly remembering and then re-reading her father's guilt-attributing letter, voluntarily to re-enter the murderous landscape. And sure enough, it only takes moments before 'everything' attacks her again – 'som om det hade rusat fram från ett bakhåll' (p. 288) – and she is hit in the neck and killed by the sniper fire of the sun. She is found by fellow colonists a few hours later in a chapter ending which leaves the reader in no doubt about the underlying cause of Gunhild's death:

Hon låg med ena handen tryckt mot hjärtat, den andra höll hon framåtsträckt och knuten om brevet liksom för att visa vad det var, som hade dödat henne. (p. 288)

### **Drifting**

Thus our claim is, firstly, that a close-reading of a centrally positioned chapter such as 'Guds heliga stad, Jerusalem', in which the textual investigation is explicitly conducted under authoritative narratorial guidance, confirms that the designing of the destructive place is a topographical ambition fundamental to the first section of the volume. Our second claim is that, in parallel with the Birger Larsson sequence, the Gunhild story could be read as a demonstration of how the state of homelessness corresponds with a rootless language situation in which the referential foundation of words, their 'truthfulness', has weakened or indeed collapsed with fatal consequences. A prime indicator of the unsettledness caused by emigration is in other words that meaning is drifting.

Interestingly, this drifting of meaning seems to be paralleled by a distinctive, generally used textual device through which the condition of homelessness or rootlessness is made manifest in the first section of the second volume of Lagerlöf's text. As it may have emerged, the overriding activity in which

characters are shown to engage in this section is their restless wandering or drifting through landscapes and cityscapes. Even the narrator is out walking, as we have seen. Whereas indoor scenes are abundant in the first volume of the novel and outdoor settings tend to be demarcated and possible to overview, in the second volume's first section much more open-ended outdoor locations are the dominant settings. In the chapter which succeeds the Gunhild sequence and which we shall now compare with it, Gertrud's tireless wanderings acquire a particular significance.

#### **Staring at the Sun**

In his essay 'The national longing for form' about the relationship between nation formation and novel writing, the American literary critic Timothy Brennan argues that one of the compositional strengths of the novel form is that it allows for 'multitudinous actions occurring simultaneously within a single, definable community, filled with "calendrical coincidences"'.<sup>12</sup> The two chapters which we are engaged in comparing provide a skilful realisation of such 'cross-time' composition, a technique which Lagerlöf regularly employs.

On the same day as Gunhild is struck down by the sun, her friend Gertrud, one of the female protagonists of the novel as such, likewise encounters language-driven death, while also out walking. This happens when, going down a steep road leading out of the city, Gertrud meets a party of exhausted Russian pilgrims who are returning from an excursion to the holy places outside Jerusalem. As she intervenes to lend support to a young woman of her own age who is near collapse in her uphill struggle, Gertrud inadvertently triggers death instead. The Russian woman becomes so frightened and disgusted at being touched by a member of a sect to which so much sinfulness is ascribed that she flees in horror, only to be hit and killed by an approaching horse and carriage. Although Gertrud is not prepared to plead guilty in this death and instead explicitly attributes it to the surrounding slander – 'Det är ert eländiga förtal, som har jagat henne till döden' (p. 293) – she is nonetheless hugely affected by it. As she resumes her walk out to the colony, she is hit by a feeling of defencelessness and waning belief which culminates when she reaches home and immediately learns about another casualty, namely Gunhild. Thus, on this dark day which the text takes us through twice, death doubly (or trebly, if we also count the bad news of Gunhild's mother) enters Gertrud's world, inserting doubt into her mind and creating a crisis in her normally so close relationship with Christ. To cure her doubt and mend the relationship she turns to landscape. In contrast to the destructive scenery depicted in the previous chapter and from Gunhild's point of view, Gertrud sees landscape

as a potential healer.

In her state of loss Gertrud is overwhelmed by a longing for a location which contains what we could describe as an undisputed correspondence between the Biblical or textual place and the 'actual' place. She singles out the Mount of Olives as the only such unambiguous place available and after a sleepless night she decides to ascend it in the hour of lifting darkness just before dawn with the aim of rediscovering love and belief in a place where Christ most certainly has set foot:

På denne sista dag och natt hade hon kommit så långt från Kristus, att hon knappast förstod hur hon åter skulle hitta hem till honom. Nu på morgonen överfölls hon av längtan att gå till en plats, som hon riktigt säkert visste att han hade beträtt. Och den enda plats, vars läge aldrig hade varit omstritt, var Oljoberget. Hon tänkte sig, att hon, om hon ginge dit upp, åter skulle komma honom nära, känna sig överskyggad av hans kärlek och förstå hans avsikter med henne. (p. 298)

We see how the tensions between distance and closeness, between being 'away' and coming 'home', between 'down' (on earth) and 'up' (near heaven), are central to the composition of this text extract, just as they represent overriding themes in the section as such and indeed in the whole novel. Similarly, the conceptual pair of *ascent* and *descent* is crucial to the structuring of the continuation. Thus, the closer Gertrud gets to the summit from which the Ascension of Jesus took place, the more convinced she becomes that the descent, Christ's Second Coming, is imminent and that she and her friends have therefore been sent to Jerusalem 'för att möta Jesus' (p. 299). When her own ascent up the Mount of Olives is completed just as the sun is about to appear, these expectations culminate in an experience of penetrating into the spiritually charged, deeper-lying layers of landscape from which Christ will emerge – a penetration which strikingly echoes Big Ingmar's and Strong Ingmar's insight into Heaven in the first volume of the novel:<sup>13</sup>

Hon stirrade på morgonrodnaden, som hade hon sett den för första gången. Hon tyckte, att hon såg långt in i himmelen. Rätt öster ut såg hon ett djupt valv med en hög, bred port, och hon väntade blott, att porthalvorna skulle svänga åt sidan, för att Kristus och alla hans änglar skulle kunna tåga ut därigenom. (p. 299)

However, just as this passage contains echoes of the spirituality of home and past, it also, to converse effect, 'quotes' the distinct marker of narratorial distance which we saw in operation in the treatment of Birger Larsson's point of view at the beginning of the section: 'Birger tyckte' – 'hon tyckte'. The narrator hereby disclaims responsibility for Gertrud's visions. These rest on a prospective merging of the arrival of the sun and that of Christ and thus attempt a hopeful interpretation of the metaphor of the sun ('Det föreföll Gertrud, att hon hade hört, att Kristus skulle komma i soluppgången på morgonrodnadens vingar', p. 299). Unsurprisingly, this interpretation is soon to be quashed by the text and the connection between the sun and the saviour severed. This happens when the chapter proceeds to show, now without any marker of doubt, how the sun in splendid isolation strides majestically out through the gateway of heaven: 'Om en stund öppnades också verkligen östens port, och solen skred fram på himlen' (p. 299). With our newly acquired consciousness of the crime the sun committed against Gunhild in the previous chapter, it is difficult not to read this depiction of the parading sun as a both subtle and brutal mocking of Gertrud's hope of witnessing the rather more uplifting procession of Christ and his angels. The sun – that is, we could say, the murderer or at least the accomplice in murder – has taken the place of the saviour. As for Gertrud herself, she does keep her faith, but at a price, it would seem, as she is caught hereafter in a repetitiousness which, the text suggests, verges on madness. From now on she insists on wandering up the Mount of Olives every daybreak to await the arrival of the saviour, rather to the embarrassment of the other colonists who fear that such behaviour could result in accusations against them for being 'vansinniga' (p. 300).

Thus, in summary, Gertrud's search for an unequivocally credible place seems only to serve as an opportunity for the text to create yet another ambiguous topography and, although a valiant attempt is made in the course of the chapter at re-reading the meaning of the sun, this interpretation remains stubbornly unconfirmed by the text as such.

### **Macabre**

By now I hope to have provided a cumulative body of evidence to suggest that, firstly, Lagerlöf's text contains a series of variations on the theme of the unsettled relationship between language and landscape or, more generally, between model and modelled. Secondly, during the discussion I have aimed to demonstrate that, as a related point, the concept of reshaping could be useful in understanding the treatment of place in the second volume of *Jerusalem*. My proposal is that, in a movement running right through the first section of the second volume, the holy



lands are reshaped, even inverted, into a demonic and deadly zone. The known places have become suppliers of new or unknown meanings.

Let us now add a final piece of text evidence to our argument and conclude the investigation by discussing more cursorily a chapter which is positioned relatively late in the section and which, within the section, functions as a form of summing-up or inventory of the casualties afflicted on the immigrants by the new place. The chapter, titled 'I Gehenna', contains a distinctive graveyard setting and could be read first and foremost as a skilful realisation of the art of the macabre. It opens by depicting how before long the numerous deceased Swedes are taking up, as it were, *too* much space in the confined, crowded cemetery they use outside Jerusalem. The cemetery wall blocks the potentially – but only potentially – beautiful view:

Nere i östra hörnet, där man *skulle ha kunnat* äga en så vacker utsikt över Döda havet och de guldskimrande Moabs berg, *om blott inte* muren hade stått i vägen, hade svenskarna sina gravar. [...] Där lågo Birger Larsson, smeden, och Ljung Björns lille son Erik och nämndemans Gunhild och Brita Ingmarsdotter, som hade dött i kopporna kort efter Gunhild. Där lågo också Per Gunnarsson och Märta Eskilsdotter, som hade tillhört Hellgums församling ute i Amerika. Döden hade skördat så många ibland dem, att kolonisterna kände sig förlägna över att ha inkräktat så alltför mycket av den trånga kyrkogårdens område. (p. 311-12; my italics)

After this listing of the dead, the chapter moves on to describe how one day Tims Halvor Halvorsson, the husband of another of the novel's female protagonists, Karin Ingmarsdotter, goes to place flowers on his little daughter's grave, only to discover that the whole burial place is in the process of being demolished to make way for the building of an infirmary. In reaction to this shocking sight, Halvor now imagines – as another listing of the dead – how the evicted corpses might be queuing up outside the hospital door demanding beds: 'Bara inte de utkastade döda kommo och ringde på sjukhusets dörr en mörk kväll och bådo att få slippa in! "Vi vill också ha sängplats här", skulle de säga. Och de skulle stå där i en lång rad, Birger Larsson och Lill Erik och Gunhild och hans lilla flicka allra sist.' (p. 314). Halvor is subsequently shown to the site where the coffins have been discarded among rubbish and ruins and witnesses in horror a scene which must rate among the most macabre and gothic in Scandinavian literature:



Mellan avskrädeshögar och ruinhopar låg en djup grop, och i denna hade kolonisternas enkla svarta kistor blivit nerkastade. De hade blivit nervrätta utan omsorg, gamla kistor hade gått sönder, så att de döda, som lågo i dem, voro synliga. Somliga kistor hade fallit upp och ner, och ur de murkna locken framträngde långa, förtorkade händer, som tycktes anstränga sig för att åter vända kistan på rätt led.

[...]

Han [Halvor] var alldeles tillintetgjord av det han såg. (p. 316)

In this hollow Halvor then discovers his daughter's coffin and, in the final passages of the chapter, he staggers home to the colony with the coffin on his back while concluding to himself that, if the same sacrilege had happened in the homeland, the forest would have cried and the mountains mourned, but in the foreign place no such sympathy of landscape is to be expected, for 'detta är ett obarmhärtigt land' (p. 317). Although Halvor manages to make his way to the colony, he collapses and dies at its gate – thus truly 'tillintetgjord' in the chapter exit and himself added to the long list of fatalities. Already on receiving the initial shock, Halvor's heart became 'likt ett urverk, som går sönder' (p. 313) – an image which incidentally echoes a significant emblem in the first volume, namely Big Ingmar's pocket watch which was destroyed when he was hit by a log in the Dala river while also rescuing children.

Doubtless there is more to the chapter 'I Gehenna' than I have conveyed here; it is also straightforwardly a moving exploration of a father's loss, sorrow and self-sacrifice. Nevertheless, the macabre and apocalyptic currents of the writing are difficult to overlook in this late text example as indeed in most other parts of the section.

Thus, having focused so firmly throughout the discussion on the destructiveness of place in Lagerlöf's construction of Jerusalem, we might finally wish to ask what seems a natural follow-on question to these observations: if the analysis that we have now completed is valid, which *anti-death* devices are then to be found in the volume, and perhaps particularly in its second section? To attempt to address that question would, however, be another investigation.

#### Notes

1. For an illuminating literary study based upon this premise, see J. Hillis-Miller, *Topographies* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995).

2. See Lennard J. Davis, *Resisting Novels. Ideology and Fiction* (New York and London: Methuen, 1987), p. 55 and pp. 87-96. According to Davis' thinking, the supply of meaning within the novel form tends to be ideological, that is resisting social and political change; however, without attempting to engage in this discussion, the present article merely emphasises the newness or 'otherness' of the meaning contained in the novelistic topographies.
3. Ibid., p. 55.
4. Bjarne Thorup Thomsen, 'Aspects of Topography in Selma Lagerlöf's *Jerusalem*, Vol.I', *Scandinavica*, vol. 36, no. 1, 1997, pp. 23-41. See this article also for a general presentation of the events which inspired the novel and of the journey to the Middle East which Lagerlöf undertook in the first half of the year 1900 with a view to gathering information and impressions for her novel project.
5. For an introduction of this concept and a discussion of its relevance to novelistic treatment of place, see the stimulating chapter "Known unknown" locations', in Davis, op. cit., pp. 52-101.
6. For a more detailed discussion of this scene, see Thorup Thomsen, op. cit., pp. 31-33.
7. Selma Lagerlöf, *Jerusalem* (Stockholm: Bonniers Folkbibliotek, Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1958), pp. 161-62. In the following, page references to this edition of Lagerlöf's novel are given in the main text.
8. Hillis Miller, op. cit., p. 11.
9. Vivi Edström, "'Gud styr". Motivförskjutningen i *Jerusalem*', *Lagerlöfstudier*, 1958, pp. 159-160.
10. Karen Blixen (Isak Dinesen), *Out of Africa* (London: Penguin Books, 1988; orig. pub. 1937), p. 330.
11. On several occasions during the course of the two volumes, 'letters', that is document fictions, perform crucial functions in Lagerlöf's narrative web. Letter-writing is, of course, a means of communication which flourishes in situations of emigration just as in literary texts about emigration to which the (pseudo)documents add an air of realism. As distance is normally a precondition for the genre of the letter, one of the story telling appeals of representing characters' 'own' writing could be that this form of communication – in contrast to the more commonly represented speech of characters – does not allow for instant correctives by the addressee. This makes possible the rendering of a whole range of misunderstandings, manipulations and tensions between characters, a technique which is used to great effect in the Gunhild

sequence.

12. Timothy Brennan: 'The national longing for form', in Homi K. Bhabha, ed., *Nation and Narration* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994; orig. pub. 1990), p. 52.
13. For a discussion of this text sequence, see Thorup Thomsen, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-37.

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## A Place and a Text In-Between: 'Translation' Patterns in Hans Christian Andersen's *I Sverrig*.

Bjarne Thorup Thomsen

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### I

In their volume of readings in travel-writing entitled *Writes of Passage* James Duncan and Derek Gregory propose to view travel-writing 'as an act of translation that constantly works to produce a tense "space in-between"' (Duncan & Gregory 1999:4). In re-presenting or re-imagining other cultures or natures travel-writers translate one place into another; this other place is situated somewhere between the foreign place the writers purport to depict and the domestic place whose language – and also often values – they bring to bear on the foreign and in which the main target readership of the travel text is also usually to be found. 'Travel-writing is often inherently domesticating', Duncan and Gregory suggest (1999:5), borrowing viewpoint and terminology from the influential translation theorist Lawrence Venuti.

When considering Hans Christian Andersen's representation of Sweden in his third international travel book, *I Sverrig* (In Sweden) published 1851, the notion of a place in-between seems particularly relevant. In this case, however, the character and direction of the translation process, if we accept the term, is complicated by two factors. First, by the fact that Andersen in the mid nineteenth century was an internationally recognised author who wrote as much for a foreign market, including Sweden, as for the domestic Danish one. His international standing can be exemplified by the facts that, in 1847, his collected works began to appear in Germany, introduced by his first official autobiography in two volumes, *Das Märchen meines Lebens ohne Dichtung*, which in the same year was published in English, in both a British and American edition, under the title of *The True Story of My Life* (Topsøe-Jensen 1975:7). Likewise, soon after its Danish publication *I Sverrig* appeared in English, German, Dutch – and Swedish. In Britain, the text came out in two editions in consecutive years: in 1851 as a free-standing volume entitled *Pictures of Sweden* and in the following year in a joint publication with *The*

*Story of My Life* – this time entitled *In Sweden*. In assessing Andersen's textual representation or 'translation' of Sweden it is therefore reasonable to assume that the horizon of expectation that governs any process of familiarisation is European as much as specifically Danish.

A second factor that might be expected to inform Andersen's picturing of Sweden and which makes *I Sverrig* stand out among the author's travel accounts is the fact that the writer in this text navigates in a neighbouring country that could be seen as only half foreign and half an extension of home.<sup>1</sup> In the context of Danish travel-writing, Sweden may not constitute an obvious site for an exploration of the exotic.<sup>2</sup> The four other international travel books Andersen published all map out southbound and fairly far-reaching journeys: to Germany in *Skyggebilleder af en Reise til Harzen, det sachsiske Schweitz etc. etc.* (1831; Eng. trans. *Rambles in the Romantic Regions of the Hartz Mountains, Saxon Switzerland, Etc.*, 1848), to the Iberian peninsula in *I Spanien* (1863; Eng. trans. *In Spain*, 1864) and *Et Besøg i Portugal 1866* (1868; Eng. trans. *A Visit to Portugal 1866*, 1972) and as far as Constantinople and the limits of Europe in *En Digters Bazar* (1842; Eng. trans. *A Poet's Bazaar*, 1988). In comparison, *I Sverrig* is unique in the authorship in focusing on inter-Scandinavian travel. In his autobiography, published in Danish as *Mit Livs Eventyr* (*The Fairy Tale of My Life*) in 1855 – that is, interestingly, eight years after its appearances in German and English – Andersen makes a telling comparison between the southbound and the northbound travel experience. In connection with his looking back on his first Swedish journey in 1837 (he travelled in Sweden six times in total) the author writes:

Jeg, som kun havde reist syd paa, hvor altsaa Afskeden fra Kjøbenhavn er Afsked med Modersmaalet, følte mig nu halvt som hjemme gennem hele Sverrig, kunde tale mit danske Sprog, og hørte i Landets Tunge kun som en Dialect af det Danske; jeg syntes, at Danmark udvidede sig, det Beslægtede i Folket traadte mig saa levende frem, jeg begreb, hvor nær Svensk, Norsk og Dansk stod til hinanden. (Andersen 1975 [vol. I]:207; my emphasis)

(Having only travelled to the south before – in which case a farewell to Copenhagen was a farewell to my mother tongue – I now felt *half at home throughout the whole of Sweden*. I could speak my own Danish and heard the language of the country as no more than a dialect of Danish. Denmark, it seemed to me, expanded and I became truly alive to the kinship between the people; I understood how close Swedish, Norwegian and Danish are to each other. [my emphasis])<sup>3</sup>

This passage may on the one hand be read as a form of Danish appropriation of the neighbouring nation space. On the other hand, the concluding lines seem to aim to annul notions of national dominance or expansion by pointing

to a pan-Scandinavian popular and linguistic continuum. The basis for either interpretation or 'translation' is, however, that the place visited by the travel-writer has the status of a halfway house between home and away. In considering *I Sverrig*, it must be asked, therefore, if the relative proximity of the 'source' country, as it were, to the homeland of the travelling and translating subject limits its application as an exotic locale.

## II

To approach an answer, mention must be made of the relationship between, on the one side, the actual journey the travelogue is based on, including its biographical and historical context, and, on the other side, the travel trajectory as marked out in the text and the recording consciousness operative therein.

Andersen's poetic exploration of Sweden feeds off a three-month trip the author undertook in the summer of 1849, from 17 May to the middle of August (Borup 1944:xii ff.). At a time when Denmark was engulfed by the first of two nineteenth-century wars with Prussia, and his mood depressed, Andersen felt the need for a change of scene, using in a rather modern way, travel as a form a therapy. Accepting the encouragement of his Swedish colleague Frederika Bremer to experience more fully the diversity of her fatherland, and in the context of an ideological and political climate in which pan-Scandinavian aspirations were high – not least in a country whose southern borders were being challenged – Andersen decided to undertake a northbound journey. As he states in his autobiography:

Mit Sind var sygt, jeg led aandeligt og legemligt; jeg trængte til en anden Omgivelse, Frøken Bremer talte om sit smukke Fædreland, ogsaa der havde jeg Venner, jeg bestemte mig til en Reise enten op i *Dalarne* eller maaskee til Haparanda... (Andersen 1975 [vol. II]:82)

(My mind was heavy, I was suffering spiritually and physically, I was in need of a change of environment. Miss Bremer told me about her beautiful homeland and I also had friends there. I decided on a journey either up to Dalarna or maybe as far as Haparanda...)

Of the two possible destinations stipulated here, Andersen did indeed reach the central Swedish district of Dalarna that was to provide the setting for climactic chapters in the travel text. The trip to the Dalecarlian locations of Leksand, lake Siljan and Falun went via Helsingborg in Skåne, Gothenburg, the Trollhättan waterfalls, the Göta Canal, Stockholm, Uppsala, Sala and Avesta. On his return journey, which followed in the main the same route, Andersen visited Motala, Vadstena and Kinnekulle. Modern steamship and 'romantic' horse-driven carriage were his main forms of locomotion.



Significantly, in the published account, impressions from both the outbound and homebound leg of Andersen's journey are condensed into a single travel trajectory, as suggested by the text's working title, *Fra Trollhätta til Siljan* (From Trollhätta to Siljan) (Borup 1944:xiv). This title, furthermore, reflects the fact that the textual or translated route represents a truncated version of the actual itinerary in that the southern-most stage, from Skåne to Gothenburg, has been omitted from the description. The narrative 'gains' resulting from this restructuring may be seen as threefold: First, the singularity of the narrated route rules out the risk of repetition. Secondly, it allows the text to climax and conclude in the most distant of the locales visited by the author. Thirdly, the truncation of the route enables the text to bypass the borderland district of Skåne and the adjoining region of Halland – both, together with Blekinge, part of Denmark until 1658 – and thus privilege topographical and cultural difference over scenery that to Andersen himself, his Danish and possibly also some of his European readership, might border on familiarity. As the desire for distance, the passion for differentness and the quest for uniqueness with its implied fear of repetition are all concepts central to Romantic travel, a reading of the relation between actual and textual journeying may thus contribute to identifying Andersen's travelogue as at least a part-Romantic project. In an illuminating study of Romantic travel Roger Cardinal emphasizes that the Romantic traveller 'could assume the role of director and even script-writer of the travel scenario' (Cardinal 1997:136). Following Cardinal, Andersen's translation of his travel experiences into the poetic version provided in *I Sverrig* may thus be seen as indicative of the directorial faculties of the Romantic travel-writer. The result is a text situated in-between the factual and the fictional.

As to the other potential destination mentioned in the passage from Andersen's autobiography quoted above, the author, regrettably, did not make it to Haparanda in the North of Sweden. He was dissuaded from embarking on this venture as he recounts in a letter of 28 May 1849 sent from Stockholm to Henriette Wulff:

Reisen til Haparanda raade næsten Alle fra, da der vistnok er meget Iis iaar og Farten er angribende, man bruger 7 Dage derop og 7 tilbage og er meest paa aaben Søe, Opholdet der bliver kun tre Dage og saa beror det paa Veirliget, jeg tænker derfor at gaae kun til den sydlige Deel af Nordland, nemlig *Gefle*, see det store Vandfald der og da gaae ind i Dalerne, besøge Fahlun og Kysterne om Søen Siljan see Kortet. (Andersen 2000:559)

(Almost everyone advise me against travelling to Haparanda since there seems to be a lot of ice this year and the voyage is taxing. It takes seven days to get there and seven back, most of it on the open sea, and it would only be possible to stay three days – and that depends on the weather. So I'm thinking of only going to

the southern part of Norrland – to Gävle, that is – looking at the great waterfall there and then going into Dalarna to visit Falun and the shores of Lake Siljan. See map.)

We shall therefore never know how Andersen's fertile poetic mind would have engaged with the exoticness of places north of the Arctic Circle, if he had actually encountered them. The tension between the poet's travel ambition and his advisers' caution could be seen as emblematic of the difference between a more Romantic desire for a 'journeying-to-the-limits' and a more touristic reluctance to compromise security.

That the north of Sweden remained, in actual terms, a *terra incognita* to Andersen did not, however, prevent him from presenting images of it in the travel account. Thus, the text's opening chapter, 'Vi reise' (We Travel), that reads as a prologue to the work as such, provides a conspectus and stratification of the entire country given from four different bird's-eye-perspectives, each mapping a segment of Sweden, including those not covered in the subsequent chapters: a stork thus presents Skåne – "'Sæt Dig paa min Ryg! [...] Du [vil] troe, Du endnu er i Danmark!'" (Andersen 1944b:5) ('Get on my back, [...] you will think that you are still in Denmark.' [Andersen 1851b:3]) – while wild swans are used to guide the reader through a mountainous North soaked in midnight sun. This narrative method prefigures, incidentally, the overriding focus employed in that later and most famous illumination of the Swedish terrain, Selma Lagerlöf's *Nils Holgerssons underbara resa genom Sverige* (1906-07; Nils Holgersson's Wonderful Journey Through Sweden).<sup>4</sup> In Andersen, the opening bird's-eye perspectives read in a wider sense as metaphors for the free recording consciousness that is operative in the text, transcribing impressions of both a literal and an imaginary nature and enabling the poet, as the opening chapter has it, to 'skotte [...] imellem fra Virkeligheden ud over Gjærdet i Tankens Rige, der altid er vort nære Naboland' (Andersen 1944b:6) (glance now and then from reality, over the fence into the region of thought, which is always our near neighbourland [Andersen 1851b:6]).

### III

After establishing the flexibility of focus that governs *I Sverrig*, it must be asked what main properties are attributed to the Swedish place Andersen presented to an international readership in a text he himself characterised as 'min maaskee meest gennemarbejdede Bog' (Andersen 1975 [vol. II]:117) (possibly my most carefully composed book). In the following, we shall attempt to demonstrate that Andersen's 'translation' of Sweden produces a place that fuses together romantic and modern, national and international and,

albeit to a far lesser extent, Swedish and Danish. A place truly in-between, therefore.

Let us first focus on the fusion of natural grandeur and modern control of nature in Andersen's imagining of Sweden. In *Writes of Passage* Duncan and Gregory identify as central to romantic travel 'a passion for the wildness of nature, cultural difference and the desire to be immersed in local colour' (Duncan & Gregory 1999:6). They emphasize how the conjunction of romanticism and industrialism led to a movement away from modernity in a quest for the authentic and the exotic. Also, they stress that in the romantic project 'travel was no longer an exclusively aristocratic preserve' and was 'most likely to accomplish its goals if it was slow, unregimented and solitary' (Duncan & Gregory 1999:6). In terms of periodization, Cardinal suggests that 'the golden age of Romantic travel began in 1815, with the lifting of the restrictions on easy movement which had obtained throughout the Napoleonic wars' (Cardinal 1997:137). It went into decline from the mid-century onwards when steam-propelled forms of locomotion enforced 'a very different tempo, while also making travel more affordable and thus more democratic' (Cardinal 1997:148). This, in turn, contributed to creating the conditions for early tourism.

According to this time frame, *I Sverrig* is very neatly positioned at the interface between Romantic travel and tourism.<sup>5</sup> While Andersen shared, as we have already seen, several of the desires feeding into the Romantic travel project, the romantic traveller's inclination to turn his back on modernity and the industrial is significantly not part of his baggage as a travel-writer in general, nor does it inform *I Sverrig*. On the contrary, the travelogue's concluding chapter XXX, entitled 'Poesiens Californien' ('Poetry's California'), which may be understood as an epilogue and meta-reflection relevant to the text as a whole, couches the poetic process in terms of technological advance, the discovery of new territories and the extraction of their riches. Borrowing the voices of modern science, transport and communication in a vision of how these vitalise and re-enchant nature, the epilogue formulates its programme for a literature that seeks and finds the romantic in modernity in the following way:

Og ud over Jorden selv lød Videnskabens Røst, saa Miraklernes Tid syntes vendt tilbage; henover Jorden bleve tynde Jernbaand lagte, og henad disse paa Dampens Vinger fløi med Svaleflugt de tungt belæssede Vogne, Bjergene maatte aabne sig for Tidsalderens Kløgt, Sletterne maatte løfte sig. Og gennem tynde Metaltraade fløi med Lynets Hurtighed Tanken i Ord til fjerne Byer. 'Livet! Livet!' klang det gennem den hele Natur. 'Det er vor Tid! Digter, Du eier den, syng den i Aand og Sandhed!' (Andersen 1944b:120)

(And the voice of Knowledge sounded over the whole world, so that the age of miracles appeared to have returned. Thin iron ties were laid over the earth, and along these the heavily-laden waggons flew on the wings of steam, with the swallow's flight; mountains were compelled to open themselves to the inquiring spirit of the age; the plains were obliged to raise themselves; and then thought was borne in words, through metal wires, with the lightning's speed, to distant towns. 'Life! life!' it sounded through the whole of nature. 'It is our time! Poet, thou dost possess it! Sing of it in spirit and in truth!' [Andersen 1851b:318ff.])

Thus, global technological appropriation becomes a trope for aesthetic exploration.

It would seem that in *I Sverrig* Andersen sets out to realise this poetic call in relation to a Swedish terrain that is typically perceived as the site of a cross-fertilizing intersection of natural and man-made. Appreciations in the travel book of what we might term the Swedish sublime are thus most pronounced when spectacular landscapes, preferably characterised by an imposing vertical axis – of particular exotic appeal to a Danish traveller, one might add – are able to work in unison with the topographical imprints left by human constructions and activity. A case in point is the foregrounded description of the intricate system of sluices at Trollhättan:

Vi stige i Land ved den første Sluse, og stode som i et engelsk Have-Anlæg; de brede Gange ere belagte med Gruus, og hæve sig i korte Terrasser mellem den solbelyste Grønsvær; her er venligt, yndigt, men slet ikke imponerende; vil man derimod betages paa denne Maade, da maa man gaae lidt høiere op til de ældre Sluser, der dybe og smalle ere sprængte gennem den haarde Klippeblok. Det seer storartet ud, og Vandet bruser til Skum dybt nede i det sorte Leie. Her oppe overseer man Dal og Elv [...]. Gennem Sluserne stige Damp- og Seilskibe, Vandet selv er den tjenende Aand, der maa bære dem op over Fjeldet; fra Skoven summer, bruser og larmer det. Trollhättafaldenes Drøn blande sig med Larmen fra Saugmøller og Smedier. (Andersen 1944b:6ff.)

(We landed at the first sluice, and stood as [if] it were in a garden laid out in the English style. The broad walks are covered with gravel, and rise in short terraces between the sunlit greensward: it is charming, delightful here, but by no means imposing. If one desires to be excited in this manner, one must go a little higher up to the older sluices, which deep and narrow have burst through the hard rock. It looks magnificent, and the water in its dark bed far below is lashed into foam. Up here one overlooks both elv and valley [...]. Steam-boats and sailing vessels ascend through the sluices; the water itself is the attendant spirit that must bear them up above the rock, and from the forest itself it buzzes, roars and rattles. The din of Trollhätta Falls mingles with the noise from the saw-mills and smithies. [Andersen 1851b:11ff.])

It is noteworthy that the sublime experience is linked to the ascent of the

travelling subject and to man's overcoming of nature's height barriers. The role of *peak* experiences, physically and psychologically, in Romantic travel is, of course, well documented. Also, the quote provides the first example – in the simile of the English garden – of the stylistic system of international 'othering' that patterns the text (see section IV).

A more pronounced and programmatic, but also more ambivalent, tribute to the industrial ingenuity of man is given shortly after in the futuristic images of the living machinery in the large metal plant at Motala. Here, the hyperactive and omnipresent '*Blodløs*' (Bloodless) is the somewhat sinister-sounding embodiment of modern technology. While the passage is a highpoint in the aesthetic embrace of modernity in Andersen's authorship,<sup>6</sup> the telling role reversal between the living, dynamic thing and fixated, marginalised man also communicates human fright and loss of orientation: 'Alt er levende, Mennesket staaer kun og stiller af og stopper!' (Andersen 1944b:11) (Everything is living; man alone stands and is silenced by – stop! [Andersen 1851b:20]) However, rather than engaging in any Romantic avoidance of the industrial, the passage is related to the fantasies of mutations between man and machine that were prevalent in nineteenth-century literature.

Further appreciations of the Swedish natural-industrial complex are found later in the text in the narrator's imagined dizzying descent into the iron mines at Dannemora (chapter XXVIII) and in the polychromatic painterly images of the melting furnaces and copper mines at Falun (chapter XXIII):

Vi vare endelig ude af Skoven, og saa foran os en By i tyk Røg-Omhylning, som de fleste engelske Fabrikbyer vise sig, men her var Røgen grønlig, det var Staden *Fahlun*. (Andersen 1944b:97)

Fra Smelteovnene skinnede Ilden i grønne, gule og røde Tunger under en blaagrøn Røg... (Andersen 1944b:98)

(We made our way at length out of the forest, and saw a town before us enveloped in thick smoke, having a similar appearance to most of the English manufacturing towns, save that the smoke was greenish – it was the town *Fahlun*. [Andersen 1851b:251])

The fire shone from the smelting furnaces with green, yellow and red tongues of flame under a blue-green smoke... [Andersen 1851b:253])

This could be described as an immersion in local *industrial* colour. A recurring topos in the text, the combined land- and techno-scape conveys the assumption that there is no unbridgeable gulf between the natural and the constructed domains.

A particular stylistic pattern instrumental in reinforcing this linkage is in evidence in the text. In order to communicate the visual properties of human



constructions the narrator employs naturalising similes as in the following representation of a long-distance view down into a mining area: 'de mange Aabninger dernede ind til Schachterne see ovenfra ud som Jordsvaens sorte Redehuller i Leerskrænterne' (Andersen 1944b:98) ('the many openings below, to the shafts of the mine, look, from above, like the sand-martin's dark nest-holes in the declivities of the shore' [Andersen 1851b:254]). Conversely, when appreciating natural phenomena, a recurring stylistic emphasis in the travel book is put on the constructedness of nature: the features of Kinnekulle's steep and rocky hillside are, for example, summed up in terms of architecture and perceived as fragments of a ruined castle~:

Lag paa Lag ligge Steenblokkene, dannende ligesom Fæstningsværker med Skydehuller, fremspringende Fløie, runde Taarne, men rystede, revnede, faldne i Ruiner; det er et architectonisk Phantasispil af Naturen. (Andersen 1944b:18)

(The red stone blocks lie, strata on strata, forming fortifications with embrasures, projecting wings and round towers; but shaken, split and fallen in ruins – it is an architectural fantastic freak of nature. [Andersen 1851b:41ff.])

In keeping with the poetical guidelines laid out in the travelogue, Kinnekulle's topography is thus figured as a borderland between reality and fantasy, between natural and man-made – and between present and past. The combined effect of the complementary tensions between signifier and signified exemplified by the two quotes given here is the joining-up of the Swedish terrain by annulling traditional oppositions between natural and socio-cultural. It is a two-way stylistic translation process that, just like the more thematically oriented observations offered earlier in this section, suggests that in the treatment of place in *I Sverrig* nature-romantic and cultural-industrial can indeed coalesce.<sup>8</sup>

#### IV

Another form of fusion that informs the text throughout is the forging together of national and international. The travelling narrator's inclination to perceive and present Swedish places in terms of their similarities to European or 'Oriental' prestige locations climaxes in the Stockholm section (chapters XI and XII). In the description of the capital, Norrmalm's streets are 'berlineragtige' (Andersen 1944b:48) (Berlin-like [Andersen 1851b:135]); Strömparterren is 'i Smaat, i meget Smaat, Stockholmenes *Villa reale*, vil Neapolitaneren sige; det er i Smaat, i meget Smaat Stockholmenes "Jungfernstieg", vil Hamburgeren fortælle' (Andersen 1944b: 47) (The Neapolitans would tell us: It is in miniature – quite in miniature – the Stockholmers' 'Villa Reale'. The Hamburgers would say: It is in miniature –



quite in miniature – the Stockholmers' 'Jungfernstieg.' [Andersen 1851b:134]). And when visiting Djurgården, 'er [man] i Borghesernes Have, man er ved Bosporus og dog høit i Norden' (Andersen 1944b:51) (We are in the Borghese garden; we are by the Bosphorus, and yet far in the North [Andersen 1851b:144]). Likewise, a bit further north, Uppsala Cathedral er 'som *Notre-Dame*' (Andersen 1944b:59) (like *Notre Dame* [Andersen 1951b:167]). Such inscribing of the foreign is, however, by no means confined to capital or central place settings. Even the chapter focused on the small town of Sala, which is an excellent meditation on provinciality, stillness and absence, makes use of an international referencing: 'det var stille, som paa en skotsk Søndag, og det var en Tirsdag' (Andersen 1944b:68) (It was as still as a Scotch Sunday – and yet it was a Tuesday [Andersen 1851b:191]). The relatively frequent occurrence, incidentally, of references to Scottish matters in the travel book should undoubtedly be understood in the context of the prominent international position occupied by Scottish literature in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries with figures such as Burns, Macpherson and Scott (the latter one of Andersen's role models as a novelist).

The Swedish terrain thus becomes a mirror image of 'canonical' international locations whose renown may have literary or non-literary origins. Just as landscapes or townscapes may be viewed through a part-naturalising and part-'culturalising' lens (see previous section), they appear as palimpsests of local and foreign. This particular type of translation would seem to have a three-fold function. Firstly, it is Andersen paying his compliment to Sweden. Secondly, it is a reader-oriented device that familiarizes the country to an international target audience, in which case, interestingly, foreignisation equals domestication.<sup>9</sup> Thirdly, it is the travel-writer demonstrating that he is conversant with a large range of geographies. More fundamentally, the international inscribing is in keeping with what seems to be a common endeavour in Andersen's travel-writing, namely to emphasize the contiguous aspects and porous borders of places, to assert the comparability and similarity of locations that may be physically far apart, and to challenge binary oppositions of familiar and foreign, home and away, north and south. Thus, while in *I Sverrig* Stockholm may be envisioned with reference to the Bosphorus, as shown above, in *En Digters Bazar*, which contains Andersen's interrogation of the 'Orient' and climaxes in Constantinople by the Bosphorus, the roles of literal and figurative place are reversed:

Jeg sagde ham, at jeg fandt Beliggenheden at være den skønneste i Verden, at Skuet langt overgik *Neapels*, men at vi i Norden havde en Stad, der frembød noget meget beslægtet med *Constantinopel*. Og jeg beskrev ham *Stockholm*... (Andersen 1944a:266ff.)

(I told him [a Turkish official] that I found the situation the most beautiful in the world, that the view far surpassed that of Naples, but that we in the North had a city that offered something very much like Constantinople. And I described Stockholm... [Andersen 1988:127]).

Such reversals suggest that the tireless translation of places into other places in Andersen's travel-writing is more than a pedagogical or self-affirming device: it is a process that calls into question the very notions of original and translated, source and target, literal and figurative.

## V

While there is a high incidence of international appreciation of the Swedish space in *I Sverrig*, any specifically Danish appropriation is conspicuous only by its absence. Likewise, the travelling Danish subject has, in terms of self-contemplative material, a very limited presence in the travel book (it plays a considerably more restricted role than in *En Digters Bazar*, for instance). Andersen intended the text to be his paying-back of a debt of gratitude to the Swedish nation for its positive reception of him and therefore he directed its focus clearly onto the country in receipt of his textual thank you, while minimising the representation of the psyche of the traveller.

One chapter which will be given brief concluding consideration, however, provides a telling and symbolically charged exception to the general withdrawal of the first person singular from the text. Chapter XVIII entitled 'Midsommerfesten i Leksand' (The Midsummer Festival in Lacksand [*sic*]) is in several ways a culmination point in Andersen's tribute to Sweden. It depicts how thousands of people converge on the town of Leksand in Dalarna to go to church and spend midsummer together. While the chapter is a celebration of local folk culture, the presentation is governed by a pronounced carnivalesque dynamic whereby protestant becomes catholic, north becomes south, and periphery becomes centre. In this carnival of cultures and colours the Danish visitor also, through his appearance and through his artistry, makes his contribution to the exoticisation of the local (again, the occurrence of Scottish and 'Oriental' emblems is noteworthy):

Som jeg sidder i min Stue, kommer Vertindens lille Datterdatter ind, et net lille barn, der var lykkelig ved at see min brogede Natsæk, min skotske Plaid og det røde Saffian i Kufferten; jeg klippede i Hast til hende, af et Ark Papiir, en tyrkisk Moskee med Minareter og aabne Vinduer, og hun styrtede lyksalig afsted. (Andersen 1944b:78)

(As I sit in my room, my hostess's granddaughter, a nice little child, comes in, and is pleased to see my parti-coloured carpet-bag, my Scotch plaid, and the red

leather lining of the portmanteau. I directly cut out for her, from a sheet of white paper, a Turkish mosque, with minarets and open windows, and away she runs with it – so happy, so happy! [Andersen 1851b:222]

These poignant images of the foreign visitor also read as reflections of Andersen the travel-writer whose pictures of Sweden by means of intricate systems of fusion and othering portray a place that integrates Romantic and modern, natural and cultural, local and global.

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### Notes

1. This should be qualified by adding that to most people at Andersen's time the closeness between the countries would have been an imagined affinity rather than an actually experienced one. Morten Borup points out that it was a rarity that Danes travelled to Sweden as tourists around the middle of the nineteenth century. If Danes ventured north,

- Norway (Denmark's union partner between 1380 and 1814) remained a more likely destination (Borup 1944:ix).
2. Morten Borup stresses that in the age of Romanticism the dominant direction chosen by independent Danish travellers was towards Southern countries and characterises Andersen as 'den første Dansker, der poetisk opdager Sverige' (the first Dane to discover Sweden poetically) (Borup 1944:xvii).
  3. Translated by my friend and colleague Peter Graves. When no other source is given in the following, translations into English are by Peter Graves.
  4. In his stimulating monograph on *Nils Holgersson* entitled *Den underbara resan* (The Wonderful Journey) Gunnar Ahlström demonstrates that, while a direct influence from *I Sverrig* on Lagerlöf's text cannot be established, an indirect connection is possible through an intermediary Swedish text, 'Det okända paradiset' (1875; The Unknown Paradise) by Richard Gustafsson. Inspired by the opening of *I Sverrig*, Gustafsson's tale depicts how a small boy from Skåne is taught to appreciate the paradisaical properties of his nation by a migrating swan that carries him through the country from south to north. Gustafsson's tale was later in a slightly modified form incorporated into the standard textbook for the teaching of Swedish at elementary school level. This textbook, in turn, was used in the preparatory classes at the school in Landskrona, Skåne, in which Lagerlöf taught for ten years (1885-95) (Ahlström 1958:110ff.) (Cf. also note 8).
  5. In an interesting passage the narrator, when answering a fellow traveller's question of who he is, seems to be gesturing towards a notion of 'ordinary' travel: 'En sædvanlig Reisende, [...] en Reisende, der betaler for Befordringen.' (Andersen 1944b:13) (A common traveller [...] a traveller who pays for his conveyance [Andersen 1951b:25]). This statement, incidentally, forms part of the motto quote used in Carsten Jensen's highly acclaimed contemporary travel account *Jeg har set verden begynde* (1996).
  6. Another highpoint is, of course, the famous chapter in *En Digtters Bazar* entitled 'Jernbanen' (The Railway), which is a stylistically and thematically not dissimilar interrogation of contemporary cutting-edge technology. For an analysis of this chapter, see Thorup Thomsen 1995:27ff.
  7. While the accuracy of this translation leaves something to be desired, it does in a general sense capture the main tension conveyed in the original passage.
  8. In terms of embracing the Swedish natural-industrial complex and interweaving natural and cultural components of the national terrain there is, incidentally, considerable congruence between *I Sverrig* and *Nils Holgersson*. See my discussion of the latter text in Thorup Thomsen 2004.
  9. A very similar method of familiarising a country through international references is used in relation to Denmark in Andersen's second novel *O.T.* (1836), cf. my discussion in Thorup Thomsen 1995:30-37.

## The Orient According to Hans Christian Andersen: Conceptions of the East in *En Digters Bazar*

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*En Digters Bazar* (1842), Hans Christian Andersen's (1805-75) second travel book focusing on foreign countries, depicts a journey that takes the narrator to the limits of Europe to climax in the section entitled 'Orienten'. In a stimulating study of Romantic travel Roger Cardinal emphasises how the French invasion of Egypt in 1798 "at a stroke established the Orient as an inescapable temptation for the Romantic imagination" (Cardinal 1997:137). The Romantic lure of the East is thus from the outset tied up with colonialism. In the golden age of Romantic travel, which Cardinal dates to the first half of the 19th century, the Orient came to represent the ultimate site of differentness, local colour and sensual intensity. One of the canonical destinations for the Romantic travellers was the city of Constantinople that forms the principal Oriental locus in *En Digters Bazar*. The conception of this metropolis and its people in Andersen's text would seem to conform to several of the fundamentals of the Romantic travel project.

### Approaching the Orient

In *En Digters Bazar* the representation of the Orient 'proper' is framed and accentuated by symbolically charged narratives of approach and departure. These framing narratives are dominated by notions of death, lack of visibility and loss of orientation or momentum. The Oriental section's opening chapter, 'En Storm i Archipelagus', thus figures the tempestuous voyage of the steamship that carries the narrator towards the Orient as a near-death experience and a rite of passage. In *Atlas of the European Novel* Franco Moretti suggests that, as a novelistic narrative approaches a decisive border, its level of 'figurality' tends to rise, with space acting upon style (Moretti

1998:43).<sup>1</sup> A not dissimilar increase is in evidence in 'En Storm i Archipelagus' as may be exemplified by the chapter's surrealistic figuring of the seagulls surrounding the ship as "den usynlige Døds bevingede Timeglas" (Andersen 1944:224).<sup>2</sup> The main thrust of the opening's figurality is, though, towards converting the steamship from "en Spurv i Hvirvelvind" (224) into the majestic shape of "en gyngende Svane" (225). This triumphant transformation, which seems to prefigure the main motif in Andersen's fairy tale *Den grimme Ælling* (published the year after the travelogue), is concurrent with the opening up of the Oriental horizon: "... jeg [...] havde for vist ventet at vaagne i en anden Verden, dog det var jo ogsaa Tilfældet. Jeg stod paa Dækket, og for mig laae en anden Verden: Asiens Kyst" (225). As in the fairy tale, expected death is replaced by rebirth and by romanticization of the surroundings.

Contrasted with its framing of crisis, the Oriental experience conveyed in *En Digters Bazar* is governed by motion and manoeuvrability, by illumination and clarity of vision, and by desire and unveiling. In his seminal study of *Orientalism* Edward Said argues that Orientalism depends for its strategy on the flexible *positional* superiority of the westerner (Said 1995:7). The following passage, which recounts a scene shortly after the narrator's symbolic entry into the Orient in the travelogue, sums up the connection between adept positioning and the act of seeing that is so crucial to Said's notion of Orientalism and to *En Digters Bazar*: "Jeg stillede mig [...] ved Relingen af Skibet, hvor de tyrkiske Qvinder sad, Kysten vilde jeg see paa, men jeg saae ogsaa paa Fruentimmerne..." (233). Moreover, the passage communicates clearly the two main fields of vision of the narratorial gaze in the text: (a) picturesque land- and cityscapes; (b) exotic living beings, including women, men and animals (as will become evident below, the distinction between these groups is by no means a clear-cut one in the text). The complexities of the representation in Andersen's text of both the Oriental topography and its inhabitants would therefore seem to merit a more careful consideration.

## The Orient as Interface

In *En Digters Bazar* the Oriental locale is first and foremost characterised by visibility and transparency: "Afstanden her mellem Kysterne af de to Verdensdele forekommer mig ikke stor, jeg saae i det mindste med blotte

<sup>1</sup> Moretti's observation is made in connection with his analysis of the spaces occupied by historical novels and concerns the nation's internal borders. It seems possible, however, to widen his argument as attempted here.

<sup>2</sup> In the following, page numbers only will be given after quotes from *En Digters Bazar*.



Øine hver enkelt Busk og hvert Menneske, dog Luftens Gjennemsigtighed gjorde meget..." (231). This natural lucidity is supplemented or, in the night-time, replaced by a multitude of man-made illuminations that form a recurring motif in the text. A particular case in point is the climactic chapter XII that recounts the celebration of Muhammad's birthday. It indulges in a landscape delineated by fire and in the sight of continents magically connected by illumination: "... Alt var som aftegnet med Ild-Conturer, *Scutari* og *Stambul* syntes bundne sammen ved det straalende Vand og de brogede Ildpunkter; det var Eventyrenes Stad, Phantasieens By, et magisk Lys var udgydt over det Hele..." (261). The dominant lucidity and luminous intensity of sea-, land- and cityscape combine with the power of the Western visitor's eye – "jeg saae [...] med blotte Øine" – in facilitating detailed and painterly renderings of light conditions, colours, lines and contours.<sup>3</sup> In *En Digters Bazar* the construction of the Orient is, as Mikhail Bakhtin has phrased it, "joined together around the *seeing eye* as a center, as the first and last authority" (Bakhtin 1986:27). As we shall show below, and as terms such as power, centre and authority may suggest, the narrator's acts of seeing are not all unproblematic, however.

The citations above illustrate that a prominent topographical trope in the text is the Bosphorus as a boundary or line of interface between the Occident and the Orient. The beginning of chapter XIX provides a major meditation on this motif. According to most of the accentuated landscape appreciations in Andersen's travelogue, the border between the continents appears to be of a connecting rather than a separating nature. There are numerous instances of the text emphasising contacts, exchanges and common ground between the East and the West. The Bosphorus itself is portrayed as eminently passable and 'crossable': "... utallige smaa Baade, hver med røde, blaae eller grønne Papirs-Lygter, foer som Ildfluer mellem de to Verdens-Lande" (260). This passage, in which the boats dynamise the cityscape, link the lands of East and West and allow a Romantic immersion in local colour, is typical of the text. Bakhtin's observation in his discussion of time and space in Goethe's work that "everything is intensive in Goethe's world; it contains no inanimate, immobile, petrified places, no immutable background that does not participate in action and emergence" (Bakhtin 1986:42) is equally valid for the depiction of the Orient in *En Digters Bazar*. Indeed, as the narrator arrives for the first time in Constantinople and Pera, the continents appear to be in a process of melting together: "*Bosporus* var ikke at see, *Asiens* bjergrige Kyst smeltede sammen med *Europas*" (237). This image is in keeping with the dominant conception in the text of the Oriental metropolis as a melting pot in which "Orient og

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Jackie Wullschlager's allentuation of Andersen's "ability to evoke landscape with the eye of a painter" (Wullschlager 2000:203).

Occident holder [...] stort Marked" (240) and where a multitude of cultures and nations may interact and manoeuvre without imposed obstacles: "Al-verdens Nationer mødte vi. [...] Ingen spurgte om Pas" (239).

In a wider sense, the notion of a melting-together of Asia and Europe may, alongside several related observations offered during the course of the Oriental section, be read as a metaphor for the contiguity, malleability or translatability of the positions of 'Orient' and 'Occident', Islam and Christian. Thus, in the complex chapter entitled 'En Vandring gennem Constantinopel' (VIII), the narrator, when visiting the mosque of Aja Sophia, formerly a Christian church, exclaims to an Islamic cleric: "... Din Gud er ogsaa vor Gud! Naturens Tempel er vort fælles Guds-Huus, Du knæler mod Mekka, vi mod Østen! – 'Gud er Himlens og Jordens Lys!' – han opklarer hver Aand og hvert Hjerte!" (245) On the one hand, this may be understood as a tolerant identification of a common religious ground. On the other hand, if we note additionally that the exclamation is prefaced with "See ei saa vred paa os, Du gamle Præst" (245), this pushes its main thrust towards an assertion of the westerner's right to *see* and, by implication, *access*, artistically or otherwise, the secrets of the East. A little earlier in the chapter, it is imagined that the mosque itself is dreaming of a return to its Christian state: "... drømmer Du maaskee ogsaa frem i Tiden, *Aja Sophia!* har en Anelse [...]; skulle de udkradsede, christne Kors paa Døren atter fornyes? Skal Altret flyttes fra Hjørnet mod Mekka og indtage igjen sin Plads mod Øst?" (245) Is this a flagging up of the fluidity of religious positions, or is it a covert reclaiming of the mosque for Christianity? The passage is part of a pattern of recounting real or imagined role changes between East and West in the text; and, like so much in the section, it is finely balanced between challenging and asserting an ontological distinction between 'Oriental' and 'Occidental'.

### The Orient as Other

While there are topographical features of *En Digtters Bazar* that may be read as going beyond the dichotomies on which both Said's definition of Orientalism and Cardinal's notion of Romantic travel are premised, other aspects of the text evidently contribute to constructing opposites of place and, in particular, otherness of people. To the narrator, establishments such as *Hôtel de la France*, where he stays while in Constantinople, and the residence of the Austrian minister, where he visits, appear as outposts of civilisation: "... strax indenfor Døren tydede Alt paa europæisk Indretning og Beqvemmelighed" (240). From such comfort zones, tempting and taxing excursions into forbidden places or uncivilised culture can be conducted. Thus, the Orient as conceived in *En Digtters Bazar* may additionally be

interpreted as a site for the exploration of what Said calls the "underground self" (Said 1995:3) of European culture. Similarly, the text seems to confirm Arne Melberg's identification – in a stimulating discussion of what he terms nomadic literature – of sexuality as a discreet but significant theme in travel writing and the liberation of the senses, particularly for the northerner who travels South, as one of the standard motifs in this form of literature, especially since Goethe's *Italienische Reise* (Melberg 2004:19).

Right from the outset of the visit to the East, the *tactile* (and risk-taking) attraction of Oriental travel is emphasised in Andersen's text: "Man siger, at for at undgaae Pesten, maa man ei komme i Berørelse med Nogen, men det er en Umulighed, vil man gjennem Smyrnas Hovedgade; denne er for snever og Trængselen for stor. Jeg mødte hele Skarer af Qvinder, tilhyllede i lange Mousselins Slør..." (226). The most prominent devices employed in the representation of the Oriental inhabitant are the focusing on the veiled female body and the unconcealed male body and the eroticisation of both. Desired, imagined or indirect unveiling of the woman features strongly as a sexual motif. Some noteworthy slippages between notions of man, woman and child happen, however, in this context. In chapter XII, a group of young, handsome men surrounding the sultan are thus transfigured into unveiled women: "... en Skare unge Mænd, Alle til Fods og skjønnne, som vare de Orientens Qvinder, der uden Slør vovede sig ud, og hver med en grøn Fjervifte i Haanden..." (264f.). Similarly, in chapter V, 'Dardanellerne og Marmorhavet', the narrator's playful interactions with a six-year-old Turkish girl, "en nydelig lille, ubesløret Tyrkinde" (234), climaxes in a fantasy of the two together being flown to an idyllic island, the girl transformed in the process into "en voxen Jomfru, yndig, som hun var det som Lille, og glødende som den Sol, der havde lagt sine Straaler i hendes sorte Øine" (236). The most overt unveiling of the woman happens, however, in connection with the narrator's visit to the female slave market, a site he identifies as one of the city's former "forbudne Veie" (243). Although the chapter's title and introduction gesture towards a notion of casual Romantic roaming through the city – "vi ville gjøre en lille Vandring" (243) – the narrator is in effect a member of semi-official Western delegation, proceeding into otherness in an elevated and protected manner: "Vi høre saaledes nu med til en rig Amerikaners Følge; men vi maae til Hest, det tager sig mere pompøst ud, og Tyrkerne see paa Pomp og Pragt. Et Par ridende Soldater ledsage Toget" (243). While appreciating the near-nakedness of black women at the slave market, the narrator is ultimately unable to disguise his disappointment at being starved of the sight of white women's bodies: "Tilhyl ikke de smukke, hvide Qvinder, Du gamle hæslege Karl, dem ville vi just see..." (243). The juxtapositioning of female youth and beauty on the one hand and male age and ugliness on the other is, incidentally, a popular dramatising device in the text.

It would thus seem that the narrator's tireless repositioning of his focus on to new, malleable sexual objects fulfils the "minimala krav på nomadisk seksualitet" that Melberg sets out: "partnerbyte och könsgränsers överskridande" (Melberg 2004:20). It is also worth considering whether in a wider sense aspects of the capable manoeuvring as such may be read as metaphorical expressions of sexuality (cf. Melberg 2004:19).

A further conceptual slippage that characterises the conception of the Orient as other in the text is the perception of humans and animals as mixed up and interchangeable. The bazaars are "en Bistade" (240); a Bulgarian peasant is depicted dancing in the street "som en Bjørn, der springer op paa Bagbenene" (239); a tiny Turkish girl "var som et vildt Kid", while her somewhat older sister (the girl figuring in the fantasy discussed above) "var mere tam" (234). A related feature of the depiction of the Oriental metropolis as a foreignised field is the incorporation of skinned and bloody carcasses into the cityscape. While this adds unconventional local colour, it also connotes primitive, wild and macabre properties. Notions of the 'wildness' of the local inhabitants are likewise imbedded in the initial figuring of their multitude of boats as "de Vildes Kanoer" (238).

Ideas of primitiveness and bestiality climax in chapter IX in which the narrator embarks on an excursion to Scutari on the Asian side of the Bosphorus to witness the dances of the dervishes. Their monastery is figured as a madhouse, "en Daarekiste mellem Gale" (252), while the dancers themselves are conceived as savages, machines and, of course, wild animals. They represent bodily indecency, deformation, (self-)destruction and, ultimately, death. The chapter ends with a hurried and relieved return from the terrors of Asia across turbulent waters – a favourite trope for the Romantic sensibility (cf. Cardinal 1997:141) – to the safe haven of Europe. In the following passage the counterpointing of horror enacted at a (half-) human level and life-enhancing landscape, of demonised interior and romanticised exterior (characterised, again, by clarity and movement), is noteworthy:

Hvor smukt, hvor varmt var der ikke ude i det klare Solskin. Den lette Baad, tynd som en Spaan, foer fra Asiens Kyst mod Europa over stærke Strømninger forbi Seilskibe og Baade; det mindste Stød og vi maatte kante, men det var ikke i min Tanke, vi kom fra Skrækkens Bolig; Alt var Natur og Livslyst. (252f.)

Thus, the Western visitor pulls out of his journeying into extreme otherness just as the exotic experience threatens to overwhelm the self.<sup>4</sup> The separating role of the Bosphorus in this chapter is far removed from the principal

<sup>4</sup> The narrator is no more deterred, though, than to be ready to expose himself to a similar experience the following day, as recounted matter-of-factly in the subsequent paragraph: "Dagen efter besøgte jeg *Mewlewis*, de dreiende Derwischer i *Pera*..." (253).

use of the waterway as a connecting force in the text. In the travelogue as a whole, 'orientalising' approaches are arguably more pronounced in the representation of people than of place. The demonisation employed in the depiction of the dervishes as well as the other forms of objectifying or 'foreignising' the local inhabitant we have investigated in this section appear to be reflected in Knud Bøgh's crude comments in his introduction to the 1944 edition of the travelogue: "De bedste Portrætter i Bogen er af primitive Mennesker, exotiske Typer, hvor Racepræget eller Dragten betyder mere end Mandens egen Personlighed. [...] Det gælder Andersen – som Johannes V. Jensen – at jo mere de fjerner sig fra Civilisationen, des sikrere er de paa Haanden" (Bøgh 1944:XIII).

### Translating the Orient

In a volume of readings in travel writing entitled *Writes of Passage* James Duncan and Derek Gregory propose to view travel writing "as an act of translation that constantly works to produce a tense 'space in-between'" (Duncan and Gregory 1999:4). In representing or re-imagining other cultures or natures travel writers translate one place into another; this other place is situated somewhere between the foreign place the writers purport to depict and the domestic place whose language and also often values they bring to bear on the foreign and in which the main target readership of the travel text is also usually to be found. "Travel writing is often inherently domesticating", Duncan and Gregory suggest (Duncan and Gregory:1999:5), borrowing viewpoint and terminology from the influential translation theorist Lawrence Venuti.

Following Duncan and Gregory, *En Digters Bazar* may be characterised as a text engaged in translating the Orient. It is governed by a belief that the travelling poet is capable of penetrating, negotiating and representing the foreign. The ability to render the East finds a figurative expression in the chapter centring on Muhammad's birthday and containing the text's main tribute to Islam. In this chapter the nightingale works as a metaphor for the translatability of the Orient. The bird is imagined as an intermediary for conveying a story of a founding nature about the immense effects of the prophet's birth: "Den Fortælling oversatte Nattergalen os, og Nattergalen forstaaer Tyrkisk ligesaa godt, som den forstaaer Dansk" (260). The statement "La illah ilallah", translated in the author's footnote into "Der er ingen Gud, uden Gud" (259), runs through the story as its leitmotif. The notion of the translating nightingale also encapsulates the powerful faculty of the imagination that is manifested throughout Andersen's travel writing.

In *Orientalism* Edward Said makes the following observation:



Orientalism is premised upon exteriority, that is, on the fact that the Orientalist, poet or scholar, makes the Orient speak, describes the Orient, renders its mysteries plain for and to the West. [...] the Orientalist is outside the Orient, both as an existential and as a moral fact. (Said 1995:21).

While this analysis is undoubtedly of relevance to *En Digters Bazar*, it should not be overlooked that the text also engages in playfully challenging notions of exteriority and interiority and inverting the direction of its translation processes. Thus, in the chapter focusing on the dervishes the narrator willingly undergoes a translation, as it were, that moves him in the direction of an honorary Turk. On discovering that everybody entering the dervishes' monastery must take off their shoes, the narrator resolutely cuts the foot straps that hold his trousers and shoes together and receives the following compliment: "... en gammel Mand med Turban klappede mig paa Skuldrene, nikkede mildt og sagde Noget, min Tolk oversatte mig, at jeg var et godt Menneske, der agtede Religionen og fortjente at være en Tyrk!" (250) The text thus gestures towards a Turkish perspective on the incomer and plays with the possibility of Oriental interiority being extended to include the westerner. Similarly, in the scene discussed earlier depicting the encounter with the Turkish girl it is the language of the narrator, the text and a key segment of its target audience that is foreignised and, it would seem, in need of a translation: "... jeg talte Dansk, og hun loe saa Hjertet hoppede i Livet paa hende, aldrig havde hun hørt saa sælsom en Tale, hun troede bestemt, at det var et tyrkisk Kragemaal jeg lavede for hendes Skyld..." (234). Such passages highlight the flexibility of consciousness that informs *En Digters Bazar* and communicate an awareness of the multidirectional potential of the translation process, calling into question the very notions of original and translated, source and target and, ultimately, Oriental and Occidental.

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# **Contesting the Novel: Andersen and the Challenges of Criticism, with Particular Reference to *De to Baronesser*.**

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There is a strong critical tradition for assessing Hans Christian Andersen's novelistic work – six titles published between 1835 and 1870 – as falling short of a literary norm founded on notions of cohesion, centrality and continuity. The de-centredness and 'restlessness' of the novels, their perceived over-reliance on immediate reality and lack of ideology, their multiple address and overt intertextuality caused, and have continued to cause, critical concerns. The challenges directed towards Andersen's writing must, however, be weighed against the challenges to criticism that his texts constitute, this in turn feeding into an underlying debate about the history and nature of the novel.

## **Kierkegaard's Critique**

A seminal contribution to the construction of Andersen as a deficient novelist was philosopher Søren Kierkegaard's first published work, *Af en endnu Levendes Papirer* (1838, *From the Papers of Someone Still Alive*). In a confident and elegantly convoluted prose style this pamphlet formulates a Hegelian coloured critique of Andersen's under-development as a novel writer, with particular reference to his third novel, *Kun en Spillemand* (*Only a Fiddler*), published the previous year.

Kierkegaard's argument could be said to centre on the relationship between poetical production and personal development. Proposing to define or rather 'decline' his better known colleague – 'vi gjennemdeklinere Andersen i [...] Livets forskellige Casibus' (Kierkegaard 1872:15; we shall decline Andersen in [...] the different cases of life)' – Kierkegaard conceives of Andersen as a not fully constituted personality. Because the author entirely lacks a philosophy of life, which is the 'transubstantiation' of experience and a *sine qua non* of novelistic art, he remains dependant in an unpoetical way on the fragmented and accidental phenomenology of his own life. This leads to tensions in his fiction:

Men netop fordi Andersen saaledes ikke kan udskille det Poetiske fra sig selv, fordi han, saa at sige, ikke kan blive af dermed, men saasnart en poetisk Stemning har faaet Spillerum, denne da uden eller med hans Villie strax overvældes af det Prosaiske, netop derfor er det umuligt at faae et heelt Indtryk af Andersens Noveller [i.e. novels]; netop derfor er det muligt, at Læserne sættes i den besynderligste og fra den af Andersen intenderede høist forskellige Stemning, idet hans Digt trykker som Virkelighed. (1872:15-16)

(But precisely because Andersen cannot separate the poetical from himself, because he cannot so to speak rid himself of it but, as soon as a poetic mood comes into play, it is (willingly or unwillingly on his part) overpowered by the prosaic – it is precisely for that reason that it is impossible to gain a complete impression of Andersen's novels. And it is precisely why it is possible for his readers to be placed in the strangest atmosphere – utterly different from the one Andersen intended – in which his fiction presses as reality.)

On more than one occasion the philosopher's rhetoric reflects this kind of unease when faced with the challenges of 'disturbing' double perspectives and dissonances in Andersen's fiction.<sup>2</sup>

Echoing Johan Ludvig Heiberg's and Hegel's dialectic theory of generic stages, Kierkegaard explains the perspectival problems, the hybridity, digressiveness and atomisation identified in Andersen's novels by the fact that the author has not made a successful transition from the 'lyrical' to the 'epical' stage.<sup>3</sup> Andersen is diagnosed with a developmental disorder, as it were, being perceived as a 'i et [...] Væv af tilfældige Stemninger hildet Mulighed af en Personlighed' (1872:10; the

possibility of a personality but ensnared in a web of random moods), in whom one finds 'saa godt som aldeles ingen Antydning af det Stadium, han ordenligviis nærmest efter det lyriske maatte gennemløbe – det episke' (1872:10; virtually no hint of the stage he should properly pass through after the lyrical stage – that is, the epic). Thus, Kierkegaard's critique can essentially be seen as a study in the pathology of a writer and his artistic products. While the philosopher acknowledges that there is a discrepancy between the evaluation of Andersen by the general reading public and by the critical arbiters and gives him the qualified recognition that his texts create in the reader a multitude of poetical sentiments, the overall judgement is that Andersen's literary activity is fuelled by a compulsion to produce and by an indulgence in a colourful exteriority that conceals the writer's inner emptiness.

In a style which, in its hypotactic density and richness of circumlocutions, metaphors and similes, reads as a statement of elaboration, Kierkegaard exposes the ordinariness, arbitrariness and unruliness he finds in Andersen's novelistic output. This is bracketed with 'andre Fabrik-Produkter' (1872:30; other factory-products), its information flow is seen as reminiscent of 'en hemmelig Protokol af Døgn-lagttagelser' (1872:30; a secret record of daily observations), and recurringly the author is represented as an incompetent ruler of his own texts and thoughts. By means of a motif of reversal, subordination and split (which might be said to anticipate Andersen's famous fairy tale 'Skyggen' (1847, *The Shadow*)), Kierkegaard has his colleague demoted from an empowered author to a secretary or scribe:

Den Masse af Kundskaber [...], som Andersen efterhaanden har erhvervet sig, har lidt efter lidt sammenrottet sig mod ham og begyndt paa en Revolution, hvilket har givet Anledning til, at Andersen har maattet istedenfor fra sit Digterstade at bestemme, hvad der skal med eller ikke, indrømme denne en raadgivende Stemme, hvilket denne naturligviis blot har anseet som Initiativet til at constituere sig selv som den souveraine Magt og gjøre Andersen til sin Befuldmægtigede, som efter Ordre anbringer dens enkelte Bestanddele paa Prent. (1872:34)

(The mass of information [...] which Andersen has gradually acquired has with the passing of time conspired against him and started a revolution, all of which means that Andersen, instead of deciding from an authorial standpoint what shall be included and what excluded, has been forced to

permit this mass of information to have an advisory voice, which it has, of course, merely regarded as the initiative to constitute itself as the sovereign power and to put Andersen in the proxy position of obeying order and bringing the individual constituent parts into print.)

This lack of control and authority leads to texts which are chaotic and whose dynamism is only apparent. Kierkegaard's critique is punctuated by images of unproductive, pretended and essentially false mobility in Andersen's novels – they perform a 'som blot Marcheren paa Stedet sig yttrende Bevægelse' (1872:28; a mobility that expresses itself as marching on the spot) – and it metaphorises their space as impassable and labyrinthine. The notion of negative mobility also involves Andersen the author and person who, with 'al hans Omtumlen' (1872:44; all his tossing and turning), lacks the concentration that could prevent life from 'at fute ud' (1872:18; simply burning out), and whose pen 'ikke blot slaaer Klatter, men ogsaa slaaer Sladder' (1872:30; splatters both ink and chit-chat). The slippages and superficiality that such images imply constitute, in the philosopher's analysis, a crucial problem in the author's comparative epistemology, which prefers to perceive 'ved et Andet' (1872:27; through something else) without thereby providing any deeper understanding of the phenomena it connects.<sup>4</sup> Thus, deficit of insight is the fundamental flaw found in Andersen, as he has been constructed by Kierkegaard.

### Andersen's Experimentation

The generic benchmarks and norms that underlie this critique are, of course, not generally borne out by current understandings of the novel – 'the most hybrid of literary forms', as Terry Eagleton (2005:5-6) puts it. Whereas Kierkegaard views manifestations of the everyday and the accidental in the Andersen novel as aberrations, these and related concepts are central to, for instance, Franco Moretti's consideration of the course of the nineteenth-century novel in his essay 'Serious century' (2006). It is Moretti's claim that the invention and spread of 'fillers' – descriptive or other passages without long-term consequences for the development of the story – was the main narrative change taking place in the novel during the nineteenth century. While realistic 'solidity' and seriousness – further dominant outcomes of the development of the nineteenth-century

European novel according to Moretti (and structures in turn to be challenged by the twentieth-century novel) – could not be said to govern the Andersen novel in any exhaustive way, the notion of ‘fillers’ certainly seems applicable. At the same time as it occupies a transitional position between ‘romance’ and ‘realism’ and retains melodramatic, carnivalesque and half-gothic features, the Andersen novel displays an increased interest in artful *description*. This interest is – without, though, insisting on the same degree of impersonality or impartiality – not dissimilar to tendencies identified by Moretti in Walter Scott:

But within the melodrama – and, like Austen, in implicit rivalry with his contemporaries – Scott manages to *slow down* the narrative, multiplying its moments of pause. And within these pauses [...] he finds, literally, the ‘time’ to develop a new analytical-impersonal style – which makes possible in its turn a new type of description, where the world is observed with more precision and ‘impartiality’ (*The Heart of Mid-Lothian*). (Moretti 2006:376)

Below we shall see how Andersen highlights specifically the detailed rendering of place as an area in which he can match or even challenge Scott.

The idea of Andersen as a novelistic innovator and the link between Scott and Andersen are explored by Klaus P. Mortensen in his informative overview of Andersen’s novels in the bicentenary edition of the author’s collected works. Mortensen sees Andersen as a pioneer in the breakthrough of the novel as a genre in Danish literature. He considers Andersen’s debut novel, *Improvisatoren* (1835, *The Improvisatore*), ‘den første moderne, danske roman’ (Mortensen 2004:21; the first modern Danish novel) and assigns his work a central role in a development which began in the mid-1820s and saw the novel established as the most significant literary form in Denmark towards the end of the century. This was the rise of a genre which affirms the common life (cf. Kierkegaard’s equation of the Andersen novel with factory goods). Mortensen divides the route of the Danish novel into two tracks, one tracing history, the other mapping the contemporary, and he situates Andersen’s oeuvre firmly in the latter category (notwithstanding an early attempt by the author at writing a historical novel whose working title was *Christian den Andens Dverg* (Christian II’s Dwarf) but which remained a fragment). Against the view that



Andersen does not master the macro form of the novel, Mortensen emphasises the experimental nature of his work in the genre:

nogle fortolkere [...] mene[r], at H. C. Andersen ikke mestrer de lange episke træk, som romangenren fordrer. Imidlertid er den moderne romanggenre, som H. C. Andersen var med til at give konkret skikkelse på dansk grund, netop kendetegnet ved sin flerstrengede handling, sin centrumsflyvende form. At H. C. Andersen ikke altid har styr på formen, er rigtigt, men man bør ikke overse, at han, som den pionér, han var, eksperimenterede. (2004:26)

(some commentators [...] think that Hans Christian Andersen does not master the long epic flight the novel genre demands. The modern genre of the novel, however, which Andersen was involved in bringing to concrete form in Denmark, is characterised precisely by the multiple strands of its plot and by its centrifugal form. It is true that Andersen is not always in control of the form but one should not forget that, being a pioneer, he was experimenting.)

Mortensen stresses that a significant source of inspiration for the rise of the Danish novel was the work of Walter Scott. Just as in other European countries, Scott was immensely popular in Denmark in the first half of the nineteenth century, with a wave of translations of his historical novels appearing in the 1820s.<sup>5</sup> Although not primarily a historical novelist himself, Andersen was no exception to the Scott influence. According to a letter of 20 May 1848 from the author to Henriette Wulff, *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818) was the first novel he read:

Jeg har i disse Dage læst 'Fængselet i Edinburg', den første Roman jeg nogensinde læste, det var for omtrent 25 Aar siden; da gjorde den et mageløst Indtryk paa mig. (Andersen 2000:543)

(I have been reading 'The Heart of Midlothian' in the last few days – the first novel I ever read, about 25 years ago. It made a huge impression on me then.)

It is telling that what is perceived as Andersen's unreflective, but productive receptiveness to Scott and his colourful representation – Moretti's new type of description – is among the objects of Kierkegaard's irony in *Af en endnu Levendes Papirer* (1872:14).

In its general tenets Mortensen's suggestion of experimentation in apparently disjointed novels is endorsed in a British and slightly earlier context by Katie Trumpener in *Bardic Nationalism*. Discussing the British Romantic novel between 1760 and 1830, Trumpener stresses that the texts under investigation 'may appear scrappy or odd. Yet they have an aesthetic of their own' (Trumpener 1997:xiv). At the same time as these novels transpose love plots into new national settings, they experiment with the spatial-temporal relations of the places they pass through or gesture towards and with the narrative perspectives they filter reality through. Like Kierkegaard, Moretti and Mortensen, Trumpener also considers Scott, whom she sees as central in establishing 'a novel of imperial expansion' (1997:291).

A particular case in point in terms of experimental aesthetics and challenges to criticism in Andersen's novelistic work would seem to be *De to Baronesser* (1848, *The Two Baronesses*), his fourth novel.<sup>6</sup> This text combines love stories with the mapping of the Danish realm in a predominantly contemporary context and takes innovative approaches to the configuration of the national setting and its international embedment. It includes multiple references to Scotland and England and contains explicit manifestations of the inspiration from Walter Scott. In the following we shall consider some aspects of the play with place in this text.

### Reaching Out

Appearing in the middle of the century – and in the middle of Andersen's career, standing somewhat removed from his novelistic breakthrough period 1835-37 – *De to Baronesser* was framed by an atmosphere of national and political urgency. Andersen completes the novel in the context of disputed and unstable Danish territoriality and of a concurrent process towards democratisation. A military conflict within the monarchy and between Denmark and Prussia over the control and national affiliation of the duchies of Schleswig-Holstein was developing. Signs of the early stages of this national tension and readiness surface in the following passage of 22 May 1848 from Andersen's diaries, sketching a dynamic scene in which soldierly exercise and literary creativity are conjoined:

Det er et særdeles deiligt Veir, medens de excerserede paa Veien skjød deiligt et heelt Stykke Roman fremad, senere op ad Dagen fik jeg Tittelen for den: De to Baronesser, i Dag en rigtig Dag til at faae Roman i. (Andersen 1995:283)

(It is particularly lovely weather and while they exercised on the road a whole section of the novel came to the fore – later in the day I got a title for it: The Two Baronesses. Today a real day in which to get a novel.)

The novel thus situated is characterised by Morten Borup as 'helt og holdent en Danmarksroman, der tilmed omspænder vidt skilte Dele af det daværende Monarki' (Borup 1943:XIII; complete and utterly a Denmark novel which even encompasses widely separated parts of the then monarchy). While the emphatic 'helt og holdent' in this statement may be disputed, the novel's desire to delineate the realm in both 'centre' and 'periphery' terms, and to provide a class conspectus in the process, is evident.

As the text in its main plot lines traces the rise of two lowly girls of separate generations to the status of baronesses, questioning, it seems, the moral legitimacy of the class hierarchy, it also investigates the spatial and cultural diversity of the monarchy. In its three parts the novel covers various geographical segments. Part One focuses on Denmark's southern archipelago, Funen in particular, before turning its attention to the capital and its upper class and courtly culture. Part Two, which Borup identifies as standing 'helt for sig selv i Digterens Produktion' (1943:XV; quite unparalleled in the author's oeuvre), reads as a radical execution of the centrifugal tendency Klaus P. Mortensen ascribes to the modern novel. It takes as its destination and main setting the outermost limits of the realm in the shape of the North Frisian Islands of Halligerne, off the west coast of Schleswig. To reach these the young protagonist, Elisabeth, and her Holsteiner foster parents must undertake a taxing journey – from Flensburg in the east to Dagebüll in the west – that cuts right through the disputed Danish-German borderland and its heteroglossic mix: 'Her i hele Strækningen fra Flensborg ned mod Nordsøen, vexler Tydsk, Dansk og Frisisk; de tre Sprog slynge sig i hinanden' (Andersen 2004:377<sup>7</sup>; Here through the whole stretch from Flensburg down to the North Sea, German, Danish and Frisian alternate; the three languages are intertwined). Later, in sequences that bridge part

Two and Three, this centre-periphery route is reversed, as Elisabeth takes inspiration from the reading of *The Heart of Midlothian* to re-enact its heroine Jeanie Dean's journey from Edinburgh to London to save her sister. Similarly, Elisabeth travels from her outlying island to the capital – negotiating all the inner boundaries of a country in which one needs 'Pas for hver Smule Vand, man skal over' (2004:431; a passport for every patch of water one wants to cross) – with the ambition of persuading the king to release her friend (whom she mistakenly believes is imprisoned there). Thus, Andersen's novel superimposes Scott's canonical trajectory onto the Danish terrain, while explicitly acknowledging the source text by letting it work directly on the consciousness of the main character:

Der var i hendes Tankegang og Beslutning intet Overspændt, og vi forstaae det, naar vi huske, hvor ganske hun levede i Illusionernes Rige, hvorledes hun alene gennem Bøger kjendte Verden. *Walter Scotts* Romaner vare jo Virkeligheden selv, historisk sande. (2004:427)<sup>8</sup>

(There was nothing exaggerated about her thinking and her decision, and we can understand that when we remember how she lived so completely in the realm of illusion since she only knew the world from books. Walter Scott's novels were, after all, reality itself, historically true.)

In this openly intertextual way, Andersen's text thematises the interconnection between the real and the fictional. It allows 'reality' to imitate art and creates, in Erik Dal's formulation, 'hvad man næsten kan kalde en fantasirejse til hovedstaden' (Dal 1997:239; what one can almost call a fantasy journey to the capital). Part Three then goes on to construct Copenhagen as a site of social stratification – with the heroine encountering milieus stretching from the brothel to the palace – before the novel returns to Funen, which forms the locus of a romanticised conclusion.

Just as *De to Baronesser* draws on *The Heart of Midlothian* to explore plot situations generated by travel and to combine national mapping and character development, it pulls the Scott novel into focus and affords it a role model status in several (meta-)discussions on art and literature conducted in its dialogues and through narratorial comments.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, however, Andersen's text seems to a degree to have been composed in implicit competition with the Scottish master. In the

concluding passage of Andersen's letter of May 1848 to Henriette Wulff cited above – which refers to the ongoing work on *De to Baronesser* – the author expresses the view that Scott could be matched or even surpassed in the artistic rendering of place:

Imidlertid troer jeg at den Roes man ubetinget gav Walter Skott for sin klare Skildring af Stedet, dog er noget betinget, han er lidt bred, og giver ikke de slaaende Enkeltheder, hvor med Naturen kan males paa Papiret; deri kan man opnaae ham, men i Characteertegning, i Opfattelsen af Tid og Historie, ja der maa man meer, end tage Hatten af. (Andersen 2000:543)

(However, I believe that the praise people gave unconditionally to Walter Scott for his clear depiction of place is actually a little conditional – he is a bit sweeping and does not give the striking details with which nature can be portrayed on paper; in that respect one can equal him – but in the depiction of character and in his grasp of time and history, there we really do have to take our hats off to him.)

This ambition, as realised in *De to Baronesser* in relation to the national location and its transnational bonds and exchanges, includes topographical perspectives and fantasies that go clearly beyond the realistic fixity or solidity – and the seriousness – which Moretti critiques in his discussion of the novel. Although *De to Baronesser* has rules of operation which privilege Denmark and Schleswig,<sup>10</sup> these terrains do not delimit the sphere of its interest or imagination. Rather, the negotiation between such rules and its desire to reach out and connect – including its concerns for the wider coordinates of Andersen's literary market – makes for arresting reading.

Already at the first visit to the manor of the older of the novel's baronesses, the eccentric heroine formulates a vision – couched in terms of futuristic infrastructure – of connecting Denmark with its old union partner:

'... jeg vil, at de skal gjøre en Hængebro; saa kan Posten gaee om Vinteren og man kan føre Korn ind og meget andet Nyttigt. Det er altid godt at Landene hænge sammen. [...] man slaer [Kjæder] fast i de norske Klipper, bygger saa et Taarn paa Skagen, og saa hænger Broen derimellem.' (2004:341)<sup>11</sup>

(‘... I would like them to build a suspension bridge, then the post would go in winter and one could transport grain and other useful things. It is always good for countries to hang together. [...] fasten chains to the Norwegian cliffs, build a tower at Skagen and hang the bridge between them.’)

This ideal of countries ‘hanging together’ is foregrounded in the novel’s central part, and explored in its favoured east-west axis. The following passage, which typifies the conversational style that the text makes frequent use of, records a collective imagining of a transnational continuum, first in a former physical and demographic form and then re-envisaged in a cultural sense:

Historie, Sagn, gamle Skikke og Brug ligesom fyldte mere og mere den Fure, Havet har gjort mellem Skotland og den cimbriske Halvø. [...]

Og *Moritz* talte om Anglernes Udvandring fra disse Egne til *England* og *Skotland*, og Kommandoren beviste, at selv Brakanden, den, hans Fartøj var kaldet op efter, skreg godt Engelsk og Skotsk, idet den raabte: ‘good day! good day!’

De mange Historier og Sagn hos det frisiske Folk, det hele Liv paa denne Kyst og Øerne, vakte Beklagelse, at ingen *Walter Scott* endnu var født i disse Egne [...].

‘Ja, her er Stof!’ sagde *Moritz*, ‘men det ligger endnu som Marmoret i Bjerget, det venter Billedhuggeren. ...’ (2004:405).

(History, legend, old traditions and customs filled, so to speak, more and more of the furrow the sea had made between Scotland and the Cimbrian peninsula. [...])

And *Moritz* told of the emigration of the Angles from these regions to England and Scotland, and the Commander proved that even the sea-duck his vessel was named after screeched in good English and Scots, since its call was ‘Good day! Good day!’

All the many stories and legends among the Frisian people, the whole life on this coast and the islands, made them regret that no *Walter Scott* had yet been born in these areas [...].

‘Yes, the material is here!’ *Moritz* said. ‘But like the marble in the mountain it is still waiting for the sculptor. ...’)

Thus, a mission statement is made for Andersen’s own mode of novel-writing, which is capable of designing geographical and cultural connections.



In this perspective, the peripheral setting of the North Frisian archipelago on which *De to Baronesser* chooses to centre may itself be read as a metaphor for the joined-up, malleable and fluid aspects of place. In his *Atlas of the European Novel* Franco Moretti suggests that, as a novelistic narrative approaches a liminal sphere, its level of 'figurality' tends to rise, with space acting upon style (Moretti 1998:43).<sup>12</sup> The description of Halligerne seems to be a case in point. Introduced as 'de mørke, svømmende Øer' (2004:384; the dark, floating islands), the overwhelmingly marine nature of the environment is made clear from the outset. The islands are depicted in a constant state of flux, subjected to both depleting and donating forces, and with flood and ebb defining very different versions of the landscape. While the sea continuously erodes and fragments the islands, it also enhances or reconstitutes them in minor, but symbolically charged ways, for example when a piece of marshland, described thus, washes ashore:

Efter Folketroen kommer dette fra Island eller fra Skotlands Kyst, men det er simplere at forklare, og dertil det eneste Rigtige, at det er Dele af det undergaaede Friisland. (2004:392)

(According to folk belief this comes from Iceland or the coast of Scotland, but it is simpler to explain – and, moreover, the only correct explanation – that it is a piece of the sunken Friesland.)

As this passage suggests, the archipelago is represented as a multi-layered and temporally 'deep' location, in which submarine or subterranean strata may surface as surreal or macabre sceneries: 'rundtom stak Stumper af Liigkister og hele Menneskeknokler frem' (2004:395, cf. 2004:389; roundabout, fragments of coffins and whole human bones stuck out).

The islands are not merely an object of the influences of strong natural forces, however, but also the hub of a culture which, through shipping and whaling, spreads tentacularly to other countries and continents: Holland, Greenland, North America figure as destinations and in plot development – an outreach which is reflected in the conversational culture's manoeuvring through the local and the global with equal ease: 'med Kaffeen fulgte andre Historier; man kom fra Føhr til Grønland, og saa til Varde og til China, som det gaaer i en Samtale' (2004:389; and with the coffee came other stories; they moved

from Føhr to Greenland and on to Varde and to China – as happens in a conversation). Mobility is of the essence in this environment. It even affects what would seem to be quintessentially static structures, as exemplified by this account of a sanded-up church whose precious parts are made capable of ‘migrating’:

‘Min Fader købte Kirken,’ sagde Kommandoren; ‘Alter og Prædikestol bleve satte op i min Kahyt, og gik med over Nordsøen. Jeg gav Alteret til en Kirke i Grønland ...’ (2004:388)

(‘My father bought the church,’ the Commander said; ‘the altar and pulpit were put up in my cabin and crossed the North Sea. I gave the altar to a church in Greenland ...’)

The vessel becomes a kind of *bricolage*, belonging to a group of objects constructed from diverse components and found frequently in Andersen’s texts where they contribute to the originality of the description.

Travel influences the islands in incoming ways too, as the text observes a growth in tourism during Elisabeth’s formative years in the Frisian environment. While the main current of this tourism is said to originate in Germany, the novel’s chief embodiment of the tourist is, perhaps not surprisingly, a Scott, Knox, who traces his roots back to his namesake, the Protestant reformer. The character of Knox is a subsidiary, but significant figure in the text, not only as a tourist, but in his further capacities as an advocate of bonds between nations and as a Scott scholar, himself a kind of *bricolage* whose portfolio of interests combines some of the main spatial, ideological and textual concerns of the novel:

Han havde i ung Alder bereist hele Europa, men i det sidste Aar var det især Tydskland, Holland og det skandinaviske Norden, som havde hans hele Interesse; det beslægtede i disse Nationer, Familiebaandet mellem dem, var hans Studium; han udtalte sig klart og tænkende derover, og var tillige den ypperste levende Commentator over de walterskottske Romaner. (2004:413)

(In his youth he had travelled the whole of Europe, but during the last year it had been Germany, Holland and Scandinavia in particular that had taken a complete hold of his interest; he had studied the relationship between

these nations, the family bonds between them; he spoke clearly and thoughtfully about this matter, and was at the same time the most outstanding commentator on Walter Scott's novels.)

Indirectly, the figure of Knox also feeds into the novel's intermixing ending, which includes the announcement of a marital alliance between the tourist's sister and *Kammerjunkeren*, Andersen's (self-)ironic portrayal of the artist. This alliance would seem to assert symbolically the international axis that lies at the heart of this novelistic project. The announcement immediately precedes the idyllic demise of the older baroness which forms the novel's conclusion, the happy death scene opened by the protagonist's repeated hurrah to England and Scotland (2004:528).

### Scale, Telescope and Theme

The gesturing of *De to Baronesser* towards a British audience, its proximity to the travel account, its lack of calm and coherence, its overload of material and poverty of style were among the perceived problems highlighted by the prominent critic and writer M. A. Goldschmidt in a major review of the novel in the journal *Nord og Syd* (1849). Containing clear echoes of Kierkegaard's criticism eleven years earlier, Goldschmidt constructs Andersen as a chronic child whose proper literary element is in playful forms such as the fairy tale or the fable, but who is ill equipped to control 'mature' genres such as novel and drama. Predicated on an understanding of the novel as a form of truth, totality and taste, Andersen is fundamentally accused of treating the novel 'un-novelistically':

Romanen, der ved sin fortællende Form er [...] beslægtet med Eventyret, lokker ogsaa Digteren umærkelig over i Yndlingsmaneren, og da den tilsyneladende fremstiller noget Virkeligt og Sandt (men dog ikkun det poetisk Sande, det Sandsynlige), frister den ogsaa en anden af hans Tilbøieligheder, nemlig Tendensen efter, som en Bi at hente Virkeligheden hjem og stryge den af sig uden at have optaget den organisk i sin Bevidsthed. Derved have hans Romaner tillige faaet Noget ved sig, der minde om Levnets- og Reisebeskrivelse, og om end saadanne Enkeltheder hver for sig kunne være skønne, skader det dog Compositionen [...]. Man kunne formeentlig paavise disse

Eiendommeligheder og Afvigelser i hans foregaaende Romaner, i 'Improvisatoren' o. s. v., men især fremtræde de med deres separatistiske Tendenser i det sidste Værk, 'De to Baronesser', som han har udgivet under navn af Roman. (Goldschmidt 1997:259-60)

(The novel, which with its narrative form is [...] related to the fairy-tale, lures the author imperceptibly into his favourite style and, since it appears to produce something that is real and true (but only poetically true and probable, however), it also encourages another of his inclinations – namely, the tendency to bring reality home like a bee and to rub it off without having absorbed it organically into his consciousness. His novels thus have something about them reminiscent of the biography or travel narrative and, even though the individual parts may be beautiful in themselves, this nevertheless harms the composition [...]. One could presumably point to these peculiarities and aberrations in his preceding novels, in *The Improvisatore* etc., but they are particularly apparent, with their separatist tendencies, in the last work, *The Two Baronesses*, which he has published under the name of 'novel'.)

Although Goldschmidt has to acknowledge the merits of the novel's depiction of the Frisian islands, also this achievement is ultimately dismissed as an add-on that cannot count towards or redeem the novel 'proper':

endelig Beskrivelsen af Halligerne, de smaa, sandede, taagede Øer i Vesterhavet, et Landskabsmaleri, som vi troe at kunne kalde mesterligt. Vi anerkjende det med Glæde; men disse skønne Billeder hænge saa at sige uden paa Romanen. (1997:262)

(finally the description of Halligerne, the small, sandy, foggy islands in the North Sea, a landscape painting which we are inclined to call masterly. We acknowledge it with pleasure; however, these beautiful images hang, so to speak, outside the novel.)

In the review Goldschmidt provides a further and very specific example of this notion of extraneous or 'separatist' textual elements by reference to the novel's opening scene, which foregrounds transient characters. This scene may be regarded as an instance of Moretti's idea of descriptive passages without long-term plot consequences in the nineteenth-century novel, but its degree of textual isolation can also be overstated. We shall conclude the present discussion by considering this

scene, and its possible relationship to the text overall, as a prism of the 'problems' posed by Andersen's novel writing.

The scene shows a boat crossing the Great Belt in a gale, observed from the point of view of a group of noble people gathered on the northern tip of the island of Langeland. The group is then left out of the novel, which Goldschmidt interprets as evidence of irresolution and excess of material in the novel,<sup>13</sup> a reservation endorsed by Erik Dal nearly 150 years later, commenting on:

den kuriositet, at personerne i den karakterfulde lille scene på romanens første side overhovedet aldrig siden nævnes – til flere kritikeres berettigede forundring, men langtfra bogens eneste digression. (Dal 1997:237-38)

(the curious fact that the characters in the atmospheric little scene on the first page of the novel are never mentioned again – to the justified surprise of several critics, though it is far from being the novel's only digression.)

It could be argued, however, that this criticism fails to account for the relationship between character perspective, narratorial gaze and presentation of place that are operative in the scene and its interface with the subsequent sequence, and to situate it in the wider thematics of the novel. By initially aligning its focus on the boat with the group and then replacing or 'correcting' this long-distance and aestheticised version by a humorous, but nevertheless revealing insight into the plight of the male protagonists onboard, the text provides not only a painterly play with *scale* but also foreshadows one of its main themes – the insensitivities of the upper classes to the suffering of others:

'See, hvor deiligt, Mama!' raabte den unge Dame, idet Baaden krængede høit paa en Sø og Vandet sprøitede hen over den.

'Grueligt er det,' sagde Moderen, 'men interessant!'

Vi ville nu see, hvor interessant de derude finde det. (2004:300)

('Look how lovely, Mama!' the young lady exclaimed, as the boat heeled over high on a wave and the water sprayed all over it.

'It's awful,' her mother said, 'but interesting!'

Now we shall see how interesting those out there find it.)

The scene thus works as a portal to the text's macro and micro interest in place, to its moral argument, and to the mobility and keenness of



observation that characterise its composition. It could be linked to a later (Part Two) and unquestionably 'key' passage, which seems to celebrate the 'telescopic' properties of the narratorial gaze, as it rediscovers the tiny Elisabeth, in male disguise, on a distant ship, thus outperforming the actual telescope that is acclaimed as 'det Vigtigste' (2004:389; the most important thing) in a Frisian household and as a 'forunderligt aandeligt Vækkelsesmiddel' (*ibid.*; wondrous spiritual tool of awakening).<sup>14</sup>

An argument can be made, in other words, that the opening scene stands less separated from the novel's main strategy than asserted by the above critics. The scene may be seen as indicative of the overtly organising and directing role of the narratorial voice and gaze in the Andersen novel, in which characters and locations, like pieces in a game, are employed to illuminate each other, and may be moved in and out of focus (even protagonists can experience long spells on the sidelines without losing their ability to develop). The scene should be placed in the context of a narrative economy that counts discontinuity, backgrounding but also re-engagement among its means. The Romantic topos of Langeland,<sup>15</sup> which the positioning of the group helps to pinpoint, and which – just like the characters – is 'abandoned' after the first chapter, is thus drawn into view again in the novel's resolution as part of an enchanted conspectus, 'et heelt Rund-Malerie' (2004:523; a complete panoramic painting), of the Great Belt. On this reading, the very scene identified by critics as un-integrated would seem to contribute to the overarching structure of *De to Baronesser*. It is part of a pattern of complex engagement with the challenges of the novel, which calls into question the evaluation that Andersen cannot cope with the demands of the form.

#### Notes

1. All translations into English are by Peter Graves, to whom I am grateful.
2. Cf. for instance: 'enhver opmærksom Læser [...] vil paa en underlig Maade føle sig forstyrret ved den dobbelte Belysning (Zwielicht), der [...] hersker i alle Andersens Romaner' (Kierkegaard 1872:15; every attentive reader [...] will feel strangely disturbed by the double illumination (twilight) which [...] prevails in all of Andersen's novels).
3. While Heiberg, in accordance with Hegel, in an early version of his generic



- system advocated the sequence of epical (thesis), lyrical (antithesis) and dramatical (synthesis), he later reversed the first two positions (Auring *et al.* 1984:320), an order which Kierkegaard follows in his Andersen analysis.
4. For a consideration of this problematic in relation to Andersen's travel writing, see Thorup Thomsen 2005:59ff, 2006 and 2007.
  5. Between 1822 and 1830 more than thirty Scott translations were published in Denmark (Dal 1997:280).
  6. The novel was published 25 November 1848, but had '1849' on its title page (Dal 1997:6).
  7. In the following, references to this edition of the novel will be indicated by year and page number only ('2004:xx').
  8. This comment is made in chapter VI (Part Two) whose title, '... Hjelp fra Midlothians Hjerter' (Help from the Heart of Midlothian), would seem to refer to both Andersen the novelist and his protagonist.
  9. Andersen's diaries signal that he was engaged in the reading of Scott during the completion of *De to Baronesser* and following his visit to England and Scotland in 1847, e.g.: 'læst Mid-Lothians Hjerter' (17.05.1848; read *The Heart of Midlothian*), 'læst i Røde Robin' (21.05.1848; have been reading *Rob Roy*) (Andersen 1995:282, 283).
  10. An example of the finer workings of such 'rules' could be that areas south of the Flensburg-Dagebüll line, along which the protagonist approaches and later departs from Halligerne (cf. above), seem to be outside the sphere which the novel can access through direct or immediate description. Thus, when the young Elisabeth by mistake is 'abducted' from an inn in Dagebüll and transported 'sydpaa' (Andersen 2004:390; southwards), it is only retrospectively, after she has returned north, and after a clearly indicated lacuna in the storyline, that her adventure can be narrated – with obvious suspense gains, of course. Likewise, the topographical features of the Holstein homeland of her foster parents can only be represented as mirrored in and compared against the Schleswig landscape encountered along the above-mentioned line:

Det Hele gjorde det levende, rørende Indtryk, Barndoms-Eggen altid gjør paa den Ældre. Moritz og Hedevig vare, som vi vide, fra Marsklandet, fra den holstenske Deel ved Itzehoe; rigtignok tyder Land og Bygninger der paa en større Velstand end denne Strækning i det Slesvigske, som Broder og Søster nu passerede [...]; men det var dog Hjemmets Character, de saae, det var de kjendte skorsteensløse Huse med Gavlen ud mod Veien. (Andersen 2004:378)

(Everything made that living, moving impression that one's childhood district always makes on an older person. Moritz and Hedevig were, as we know, from the marshland, from the Holstein part at Itzehoe; certainly the land and the buildings there suggest greater affluence than in the Schleswig part through which the brother and sister were passing [...]; but what they were seeing nevertheless had the character of home – the familiar houses without chimneys, with their gable ends on to the road.)

In this way the horizons of the novel are widened through Andersen's

representation 'through something else', as Kierkegaard has it.

11. A related vision of the virtues of the infrastructure of the future is provided by the narrator in Part Two, as the bumpy roads on the Schleswig dykes are 'translated' into smooth railways (2004:377-78).
12. Moretti's observation is made in connection with his analysis of the spaces occupied by historical novels. It seems possible, however, to widen his argument as attempted here.
13. 'Hele dette Selskab forsvinder af Fortællingen, Damerne blive glemte, eller Digteren har senere ikke kunnet skaffe dem Plads' (Goldschmidt 1997:260; This whole party disappears from the narrative, the ladies are forgotten, or the poet has subsequently been unable to create room for them).
14. Incidentally, Kierkegaard, too, uses an elaborate telescopic metaphor in his Andersen critique as he directs his attention on to his main subject, hoping to guard against the sense illusion of direct perception (1872:9-10).
15. In the introduction of *Langeland* (2004:300) Andersen borrows Oehlenschläger's emblem of a rose branch lying in water from 'Langelands-Reise i Sommeren 1804' (Journey to Langeland in the Summer of 1804) (Oehlenschläger 1926:171), thus acknowledging his prominent Romantic predecessor (cf. Dag Heede earlier in this volume, pp.155-174, particularly pp.166-167, on Andersen's Oehlenschläger fascination).

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